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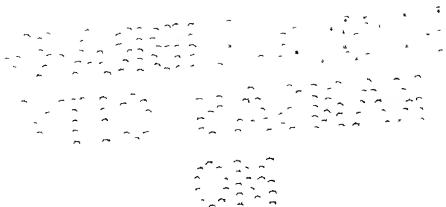


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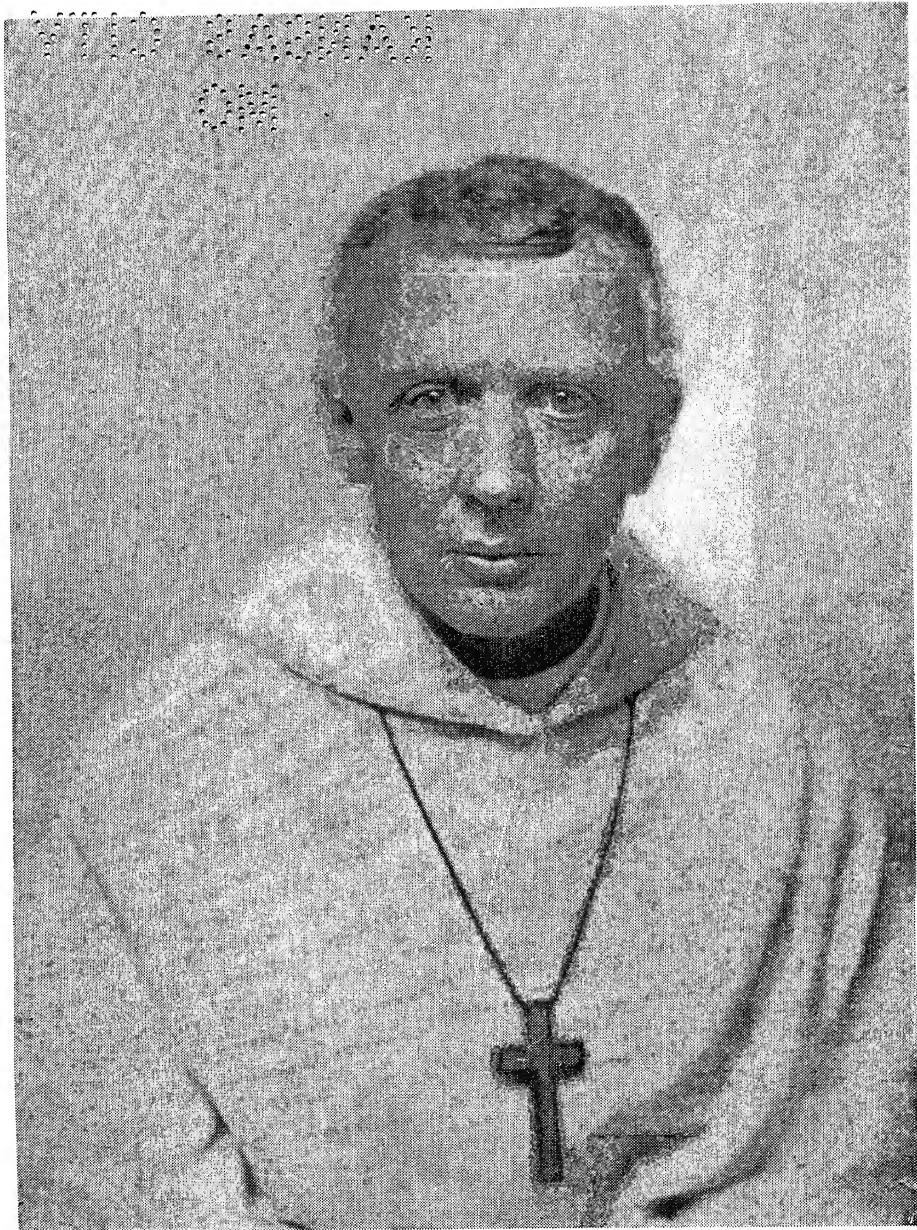
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Founder of The Order of The Holy Cross

BY  
VIDA DUTTON SCUDDER

WITH A PREFACE BY ALAN WHITTEMORE  
SUPERIOR OF THE ORDER



NEW YORK  
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY, INC.  
1940

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V. D. S.



## PREFACE

By ALAN WHITTEMORE

SUPERIOR OF THE ORDER OF THE HOLY CROSS

Ever since I read Miss Scudder's autobiography, *On Journey*, I have yearned to see "the Attic Study" at her house in Wellesley. A month ago my desire was satisfied. We sat beside an open fire with the manuscript of this book on a table between us and talked about Father Huntington. I wondered then, as I have so often wondered on other occasions during recent years, whether the Father Founder, in that wonderful new world so close to this, heard us.

Intimately as I knew him before and deeply as I loved him, I know and love him still more, now that I have read this biography. His spiritual sons in the Order of the Holy Cross will be especially grateful for the glimpse it gives of our beloved Father in the days of his youth.

Miss Scudder was good enough to write this book at my request. I want to thank her; and I do, with all my heart, on behalf not only of the Order but of all Father Huntington's friends.

I want, furthermore, to express my admiration for the insight and skill which have created so uncanny a likeness. You will meet the Father again in the following pages; see once more his luminous, penetrating eyes and hear him speak. You will rejoice, perhaps—as I did—that Miss Scudder has achieved so just a balance between his social and religious interests, with the emphasis always on the latter.

There are only two points where she seems, to my mind, to have missed the mark. They constitute such a small part of

## PREFACE

the book that it would be ungenerous to single them out were it not for Miss Scudder's own express injunction. "And," she said—for the points in question are directly concerned with the Order—"claim a lot for the O. H. C. and the Religious Life in general."

On page 309 the author says that Father Huntington "had definitely conceived a community which should combine intrepid leadership toward social justice with interior personal discipline and spiritual ministries. But his vision was too wide; it was perhaps too personal to himself to be realized," etc. Here and elsewhere in the book it is implied, if not asserted, that the Father would have liked our Order to commit itself, corporately, to some particular form of social action.

I doubt it.

That he was grieved because we did not, as individuals, share more fully his own practical interest in social and economic affairs Miss Scudder made plain. But this very fact makes all the more significant his reticence on these matters so far as his brethren in the Order were concerned.

I remember the alacrity with which he responded to our occasional requests for information, especially about the Single Tax. He was eager to explain and defend it whenever the subject was opened by someone else. But I do not remember a single occasion when he broached it himself.

My own interpretation is this; that he never lost his own devotion to social obligations; that it would have gladdened his heart if some (perhaps all) of his brethren had been similarly moved; and that he would have welcomed the inclusion among our works of a continued ministry to and life among the poor; but that he would not have wanted this except as a spontaneous expression of his brethren's desire; and that under no circumstances would he have wished a program of social thought or action to constitute the Order's *raison d'être*.

## PREFACE

It is conceivable to me that, at the outset, he "definitely conceived a community" along these lines. If this was indeed the case, however, I think that the vision was unrealized not because it was "too wide" but because he himself and the Order which he founded came to a still wider vision; a vision which pierced to the essence of monasticism and which thereby (incidentally) touched the mainspring of all genuinely wholesome and constructive social work.

For the essence of monasticism is a life dedicated to God. And only from such a life—whether in or out of a religious community—can be derived sound social action.

"I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered."

The second law (of love for one's neighbor) must be subsidiary to "the first and great commandment." When social workers disregard this principle both the work and the workers are destroyed.

The life of a Religious Order comes first. Works spring from the life. That the Father Founder understood this, at all events by the time he wrote our Rule, will be evident to anyone who reads it, or who, for that matter, reads Miss Scudder's sympathetic and masterly analysis of it.

Father Huntington, I think, realized more and more as he went on that the chief task given him by God was the establishment of the religious life for men in the American Church. Had it already been established—had there been with us as in the Roman Church an ancient and continuous tradition and a strong core of contemporary monasticism in which that tradition is manifest—it is conceivable that he might have desired the Order of the Holy Cross formally to dedicate itself to a particular work. Various Roman Catholic communities have

## PREFACE

done this without obscuring in their own Communion the essential principle of monasticism. Among ourselves, however, action has been so long and so universally preferred to contemplation, results to motives, and material achievements to a right ordering of life both of the individual and of the group, that the Father would have foredoomed his Order to failure if he had linked it up with any particular work. In a short time the particular activity would have become the goal.

It is because he saw this that our Founder deliberately gave up the work on the East Side and moved to Westminster.

Here is what our Rule says about the matter. "It will be impossible to lay down any explicit directions, as to the external works of the Order. We place ourselves unreservedly in God's hands, and we cannot tell for what He will use us. Our concern is to prepare ourselves to receive His gifts of grace, and to use them in perfecting ourselves in the life of prayer, and in mutual loving service to one another. Then we shall be ready for whatsoever call may come, and we shall gain the illumination of the Holy Spirit whereby to know what requests to accept and what to refuse."

I hope that some of our number will become enkindled—perhaps through reading this book—with the desire to follow in our Father's footsteps and join in "intrepid leadership toward social justice." I hope that if so the Order will give them abundant opportunity. And I hope that, some day, we will once more have a house on the East Side. But I trust, too, that no activity of this sort will blind our eyes, any more than it blinded the eyes of our Founder, to that which was his still more fundamental concern.

The other point at which, to my mind, Miss Scudder has gone a little astray is with regard to the Order's polity.

On page 200, for example, you will find the following sentences. "Does he (Father Huntington) take a leap in the dark,

## PREFACE

someone will ask, when he associates perfected obedience with submission to the authority of a single man, be he Superior of an Order, President, Dictator, what you will? Is such a concept for democracy?" "Visions of the Totalitarian State, of Imperialisms old and new, rise before one."

It was apropos of my objection to these and similar remarks and queries that Miss Scudder generously invited me to "claim a lot" in this Preface for the Religious Life in general and for the O. H. C. in particular.

Nothing would delight me more than to deal with the whole problem of corporate human relations and the solution which our own little community is trying to work out. The experiments of such a microcosm might be richly suggestive. A study of this sort, however, would require a volume in itself.

All I can do here is to state that, as a matter of fact, authority in the Order of the Holy Cross is vested ultimately not in any individual but in the group; and that it thus conforms to Miss Scudder's formula (of page 296 *infra*) for Anglican as contrasted with what she considers characteristically Roman polity.

Our Superior is elected for a limited term and by suffrage of all the members. His authority is limited by our Rule, Constitution and Customal (which themselves receive their sanction from the group and may be amended by it) and appeal may be made from his rulings to a Council consisting of certain members elected by the whole group and, ultimately, to the group, or "Chapter," itself. He may be removed from office at any time by a two-third vote and another elected in his stead.

Nor is this all. "The Superior is not merely the official head or representative of the Order. He is to be the living illustration of its spirit. . . ."

This means that he is to seek God's guidance as to decisions

## PREFACE

and policy not merely through his personal prayer-life but through a most sensitive response to the best mind of his brethren. He must strive to see that each element in the Order has a fair opportunity to express itself and that he himself represents, under God, the spirit of the group as a whole. If he fails in this respect, to any marked degree, he is not a good Superior.

It will be plain, I think, that my two issues with Miss Scudder are concerned with questions of fact only. So far as fundamental principles are concerned there is no ground for disagreement. It would be hard to find a more friendly and inspiring appreciation than hers either of the Religious Life in general or of the Order of the Holy Cross in particular. Indeed, so far as the latter's present membership is concerned, she has been far too kind to us.

Has she been too kind to our Father Founder, also? She says she has struggled against this; that she has tried to be not only true to his virtues but "true to his faults."

Someone has remarked that God allows even the greatest of his servants to retain some flaws of character throughout their lives, in order to keep them humble. There are wont to be errors in judgment, too.

I wonder, for example, if Father Huntington was right in his attitude toward endowments. Miss Scudder, on the authority of one of his dearest and best-informed disciples, represents him as willing to accept endowments for the active works of the Order, such as St. Andrew's, Kent and the African Mission, but not for the support of the Mother House.

To date, such informal discussion of the matter as has taken place within the Community has been largely academic. But it may not be so always. As staunch friends die and leave us bequests we approach the moment when we must solve a practical problem. Are we to consider ourselves merely as

## PREFACE

trustees for such funds and under obligation to pass them on to other agencies, religious or social? Or shall we better fulfill the intentions of the testators and the requirements of our vocation by deriving from them a part of our support?

For my part, I am by no means certain, one way or the other, which course our dear Lord would have us take when we face the dilemma.

On the one hand, the danger of a worldly spirit is obvious.

On the other, one feels with regard to any object, that the possibility of abuse is not a sufficient ground for complete disuse.

It is hard to see any just distinction in principle between ownership of real estate and ownership of a fund in the bank. They both constitute endowment. If the Order possessed no land and buildings it would require extra money in order to rent a dwelling place. Father Huntington had no objections to obviating the need for this extra sum through our possession of real estate. In any case a sharp distinction must be made, at many points, between the absolute poverty of the individual member of a Religious Community and the simplicity—but not complete penury—of the life of the group as a whole. ~~I~~ Communal possession is by no means contrary to the principles of monasticism.

As a matter of fact there is abundant precedent in the history of Religious Communities either for accepting or refusing gifts for endowment. My concern here, however, is not with the problem in general but simply with Father Huntington's relation to it.

His philosophy was strongly "incarnational" in the sense that he believed in consecrating God's creations, both of mind and body, not so much by disuse as by right use.

If we must ever face the practical question of an endowment, we must frankly recognize the possibility, at all events,

## PREFACE

that our Founder had not thought through the practical application of his general principles to the particular problem. I am certain that he would want us to do our own thinking, with earnest prayer for the illumination of the Holy Spirit, rather than take his opinion just as it stood, on this or any other subject, as though he were infallible. He wanted us to grow.

It is this last fact which should be evident to future generations of Holy Cross Fathers and Brothers when they read Miss Scudder's biography of their Father Founder.

I think of them now, rejoice with them in the living story which the following pages unfold and bid them regard their Father as one who would have them think and act fearlessly—daring to strike out in new directions if need be, unhampered either by contempt for or slavish subservience to the past.

The Father was not infallible. But how nearly infallible he seemed! And how few were the spiritual and ethical problems which he had *not* thought through!

One remembers going to him with an idea which had come during prayer, so profound and delicately subtle that one despaired of suggesting it to another. Yet one wanted to be rid of it if it were obnoxious, or to have the joy of reassurance if it were not.

Father Founder listened with that scrupulous attention which he gave to a serious question of any sort—his eyes tight shut, his lips pursed.

Presently, he began to speak; a question or two, at first, carefully put so as not to distort the original idea in the other's mind. Then, he expressed that idea in its integrity, picturously, with a sentence or two.

Finally, his eyes opened and he said abruptly, "Of course I believe it. I don't see how anyone could believe differently."

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## *ON THE DEATH OF A GREEK MONK\**

One more place is void  
At the long board and in the house of prayer.  
One more link destroyed  
Of the bright chain that binds us everywhere;  
A sigh is mingled with the morning's breath,  
For in the midst of life we are in death.

One more prayer has ceased  
To mingle with the incense of the shrine;  
Where the weeping priest  
Gives to one less the mystic Bread and Wine;  
The Altar lacks a lamp, the Stall a wreath,  
For in the midst of life we are in death.

One more name has passed  
To mingle with the everlasting choir,  
Around, invisible,  
Lifting our hearts with passionate desire;  
Lifting our hearts, and covering our sins,  
Lo, in the midst of death, True Life begins.

\* "I am sending you some verses that seem very Christian."—J. O. S. Huntington, May 16, 1927.



## *PREAMBLE*

The best evidence of Christianity is to be found in the lives of the saints. It is very desirable to study theology; the modern world desperately needs to renew allegiance to that Queen of Arts and Sciences, and “rethinking” the ancient creeds,—a process which often ends in reasserting them,—must continue from generation to generation. Equally important is it to satiate oneself in Christian worship, which holds every doctrine in solution. But the most effective demonstration of Christianity is fellowship with the Christian saints.

Religious biography in its evidential values is too much neglected. Using a Litany of the Saints is not necessarily a mechanical roll call of names; it is an evocation of cumulative witness to the dynamic reality of the Supernatural; and as we note how the great Catholic verities are interwoven in the very substance of saintly lives, serene confidence in that reality replaces hesitant scepticism or complacent humanism. Compassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses, we are nerved to lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and to run with patience our appointed race. Many in that cloud of witnesses are officially canonized; more lived and died without official fame. The light of Christianity shines undimmed down the ages, and in no generation have great saints failed to appear; a statement which could be verified, did time permit. One marvels at the fatuous modern failure to recognize the evidence, which no scientific advance, no new psychology or philosophy, can contradict.

“The heavens shall confess Thy wonders, O Lord; and Thy truth in the Church of Thy saints. Alleluia!”

\* \* \* \* \*

## *PREAMBLE*

The figure of James Otis Sargent Huntington is in itself romantic and noble; it is also important, because in his life and personality were focused and harmonized widely disparate movements in the United States of the pre-war period. The revival of the monastic life within the narrow precincts of the Protestant Episcopal Church may appeal to the interest of a very small section of the public; but its suggestiveness is deeper than the scope of its influence implies. And the religious impulse in Father Huntington knit itself into the instincts of the courageous social reformer with an intimacy which made of him in his youth an outstanding pioneer in that movement of social reconstruction still gathering impetus. The union of these two devotions creates his distinctive quality. In a period and a nation possessed by thrilling exultation that the "years of the modern; years of the Unperformed" were their lot,—little did men know what the "years of the Unperformed" would develop—appears this witness to abiding values, this reviver of tradition, Founder of the American Order of the Holy Cross. It is an arresting combination. Already in England the creation of Religious Orders for both men and women was well under way. Father Huntington's debt to them must be clearly noted. But the special fact about him was his union of loyalty to tradition rooted deep in the mediaeval past, with intense modernity and ardent American patriotism. "He brought forth from his treasures things new, and old."

To study him from his idyllic childhood through the stormy years of the last and the present century, and in his widening contacts till his death, is to gain illumination on much lying below the surface in our ever-changing civilization. His most permanent achievement was indubitably neither in the sphere of reform nor in his foundation of the Order of the Holy Cross. It was in his power to touch the springs of personal life, as he ministered patiently through long years to those peren-

## *PREAMBLE*

nial human needs which never alter, while cultures and nations rise and fall. Perhaps this aspect of his work more than other justifies, nay demands, a biography of James Huntington. But we cannot dissociate this ministry from concern over the salient issues emerging as time moved on. Always transformation of the individual will remain the pre-requisite, if an academic term may be allowed, to all wholesome and enduring social change. But He Who bade us pray, "Thy Kingdom come on earth," called us to a wide outlook; and this follower of His, in strong revolt against Protestant individualism, was impelled to earnest social study and action. The Religious life was to him no Utopia of Escape; his was not the "ascetic" solution of withdrawal decried by brilliant modern thinkers like Reinhold Niebuhr. Rather, the solemn and ageless rhythm of devotion to which his spirit moved, offered him a Well of Healing whence like Spenser's St. George he rose every day, refreshed and strong, to fight our modern dragons.

And what figure of his day was a more effective fighter? It makes no difference whether the special causes he espoused succeeded or failed, whether they survived or were submerged in the sweep of revolutionary change which carries along our bewildered generation. The once magic initials K. of L. are forgotten by a public gazing into murk where the letters A. F. of L. and C.I.O. glare at each other with light celestial or infernal as one chooses; but the principle of the Organization of Labor for which James Huntington contended, involving as it does the right of the workers to democratic self-expression, found an early symbol in them. Single Tax retains its vitality as a separate movement, even while land reform is integrated as a part only of the whole modern vision of social reconstruction. If "Cail"<sup>1</sup> has disappeared, "C.L.I.D."<sup>2</sup> has taken its

<sup>1</sup> The Church Association in the Interests of Labor.

<sup>2</sup> The Church League for Industrial Democracy.

## **PREAMBLE**

place. Father Huntington's underlying principles still challenge us. Above all, the religious witness endures. Loyalty to the Past; welcome to the Future; and in both, power to live and move in the Timeless; in that eternal order where alone reality abides.

Three phases of his life call then for study. First, the childhood and youth, seen in a setting which summarized the characteristic features of New England at its best; where ideal values obtained to an astonishing degree; where standards might clash, but were never lowered. Then, eager entrance under spiritual compulsion into the tumultuous life of New York, just when the heroic period of American democracy was drawing to a close, when social dissatisfaction was seething in our national melting-pot, when the incipient class struggle was finding crude expression through the Knights of Labor, and the more theoretical yearning for a new social order manifested itself through Henry George and the movement for the Single Tax. By the still waters of the little Concord River, and the peace of Walden Pond, in village life fraught with revolutionary memories, had lived the characteristic leaders of ideals in the previous generation: Thoreau, Alcott, Emerson. But only the confused stir of a metropolis, with its jostling of races and its conflict of classes, its cumulative misery and its murmuring underground challenge to American complacency, could furnish suitable setting for an American idealist of the Eighties and Nineties. So the young monk may be watched, in all the fervor of his vocation, running atilt knight-wise against just-discovered abuses and evils, which today, ancient already, still strike with fresh horror and temptation to cynicism or despair on the surprised American mind.

A fine figure, heroic in action. But the years pass. And presently the scene shifts once more. From New York slums to haunts of lovely peace, now in Maryland, now on the banks

## *PREAMBLE*

of the Hudson; from the clash and clangor of a city tenement district to the holy silence of a monastery, uninvaded by street cries. The central faith, the central emphasis, endure; but manifestations change. The consecration to the Living Christ, Carpenter of Nazareth, Redeemer of the world, which had inspired the young reformer, is now chiefly evident in the work of organizing and developing the nascent Religious Order, growing slowly but surely, which he had been led to found. Adventure was not left behind when Fourth Street was exchanged for West Park; the problems of adjustment which beset a nation are likely to exist in miniature in any community; and in this adventure of shaping a Religious Order, including the extension of its work to sundry centres, Father Huntington's later activities were focused.

Most of all is to be noted the growth to ever-larger proportions of his ministry to individuals. And now and then, glimpses may be vouchsafed of that drama of interior experience in which he moved, companioned by the saints who have attained, as by us sinners who yet strive. In that "One Communion and Fellowship" currents of love and prayer flow forever earthward from Paradise, even as they rise from earth toward the Unseen. "I shall always intercede," said Father Huntington on his death-bed; faithful in his hour of trial to his practice throughout the years.

\* \* \* \* \*

Holy James Huntington, pray for us!



*FATHER HUNTINGTON*



♦

## CHAPTER I

### *THE BACKGROUND*

#### I

MORE favorable surroundings than those of James Otis Sargent Huntington's childhood can hardly be imagined. There was an idyllic quality to New England life on the higher levels during the last half of the nineteenth century. Taking itself with "high seriousness," it was marked by dignity, simplicity and peace; its "chief events," as the old phrase goes, "occurred in the intellect." The Civil War came too early to affect James, and it was followed in the Northern states, though not in the South, by a long pause. The period was, to be sure, one of germinal unrest, yet as compared with present days, it was free from complications and intricacy, and pervaded by a serene sense of leisure. "Acceleration," says an English critic, is the distinctive word for modern America; but in those days, our chase around the same rose-bush, calling "Faster! Faster!" had hardly begun. In the annals of the Huntington family, there is no instance when any one seemed in a hurry. Even in the towns associated with James Huntington's early days,—Cambridge, Roxbury, Boston,—a country quality survived; streets were not noisy, sky-scrappers were unknown, manners were neighborly. Saturated with the old Puritan tradition at its best, life might seem to modern young folk a trifle austere; but it was high-bred, wholesome, eager, and gay.

Suitable setting for this life was "Forty Acres," the Hunt-

## *FATHER HUNTINGTON*

ington estate in Old Hadley, family centre for generations: a "haunt of ancient peace" where arched elms bend over meadows extending to the calm-flowing Connecticut River, and the encircling hills of Western Massachusetts shut out the world, enclosing welcome sense of space and freedom. Ruskin says somewhere that Shakespeare could never have been allowed mountains; the gentle Warwickshire country was his natural home. The Connecticut is a nobler stream than the Avon, but Western Massachusetts is in some ways not unlike Warwickshire.

"I am almost inclined to believe that it is the level land which is loved the best, land that has no beauty in itself, but only what it borrows from the clouds and the mists, the night and the morning. . . . The value of atmosphere is often lost in the beauty-spots of the earth, where our eyes are so held that we miss, as it were, the soul of the picture. But it is not possible to miss the soul in the level country, where, there being nothing to break the line of vision, the earth takes unto itself some of the characteristics of water, by acting as a reflection of our moods. The greatest writers and thinkers have been born in the level lands."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps character reaches its freest growth in country that can refresh the spirit but will never dominate it or intrude.

## II

James Huntington might well be proud of his ancestors, for they represented on both sides the best unadulterated Puritan strain. Any one reading the family annals, as presented by Mrs. Ruth Huntington Sessions in her autobiography, *Sixty Odd*, or by Arria Huntington in the *Memoirs* of her father

<sup>1</sup> E. M. Martin. Quoted by E. Herman, *The Finding of the Cross*, Doran, N. Y., 1926, p. 59.

## THE BACKGROUND

the Bishop, gets delightful and varied vibrations from American history. It was not till the turn of the last century that the Huntingtons intermingled with other stocks. Distance lends enchantment to the genealogist; the blood of kings doubtless flows unrecognized in the veins of many people belonging to the lowest social strata; nor is there much sense in the satisfaction some men feel in counting a royal mistress or a swashbuckler among their progenitors. Yet an interest in lineage is not a bad thing in our leveling American life. The history of the Huntingtons for six generations as described by Arria Huntington, "is that of stout-hearted men of action, with established religious convictions, faithful to Church and state, upright in morals."<sup>1</sup>

It is said that ninety per cent of those bearing the name are direct descendants of one Simon who died on his way here from England in 1632. Be this as it may, the men who colonized Massachusetts and Connecticut sprang in general from the Eastern counties of England, and they came, not seeking better economic opportunity like later arrivals from the Western counties, but in quest of freedom. As one authority puts it, "they were the 'scofflaws' of their day, often flouting contumaciously the statutes of their kingdom." No cheap impulse of personal rebellion moved them; always their revolt was at the call of conscience; now regicide, now Tory, they followed truth. And these scoffers at the law indubitably made good. An entertaining statistical study has been made by a member of the family.<sup>2</sup> One would not put too much stress on the fact that sixteen per cent more of men of Puritan extraction than of ordinary mortals appears in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; but the complacent remark of the compiler would cer-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir and Letters of Frederic Dan Huntington*. By Arria G. Huntington. Houghton-Mifflin Company, Boston, Mass., 1906, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See Monograph: *Sixth Reunion of the Huntington Family*. Norwich Town, Conn., 1937, p. 24.

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tainly seem justified: "there can be little doubt that through no virtue of our own, we are endowed with more than average capacity for doing good or ill to the world."<sup>1</sup> "How far," he adds, "we owe this capacity to purely biological inheritance, and how far to traditions of Puritan conduct, passed on from generation to generation, can not yet be determined." Such calculations are perhaps more amusing than significant; but it is really interesting to see that "this early differentiation persisted through three centuries."

Traits of the early "scofflaws" did not die out. "From them," says the writer quoted, "we doubtless inherit our indifference to precedent, disregard for authority, and the tendency to individualism." It was chiefly in the religious field that these qualities appeared. The Puritan tradition was strong; as Dr. James L. Huntington says in his study of his uncle, "When we look at the lines which converged to bring this great figure in the service of his Master to fruition, we see that religious devotion was a dominant strain." It is startling to our secularized generation to note how entirely life in early New England, as in seventeenth-century England, was controlled by religious interests and excitements. These interests rarely conduced to inward peace. Always earnestly scrutinizing the religious assumptions of their parents, and always true to type, the forbears of James Huntington were habitually in reaction. As the first settlers had rebelled against what they deemed the worldliness and conventions of the Established Church, so his grandparents rebelled against the terrific austerities of Calvinism. Thus swings the pendulum.

The Rev. Dan Huntington, graduated from Yale in 1794 with first honors, was apparently the first rebel on record. He and his brother-in-law Charles Phelps associated themselves with the rising Unitarian movement, which attracted

<sup>1</sup> *Op. Cit.*, p. 40.

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much of the most truly spiritual insight of those days. Of how mild a character was this divergence from the faith of their fathers may be judged from the petition addressed to the old Church of Christ at Hadley, that they and their children be allowed continued communion with the Church, "as Unitarians." The request was refused, in a bitter tone, but with arguments not lacking in logic. The ever-present yearning for unity of spirit independent of unity in conviction betrays itself in the episode, countered by the equally persistent, if constantly frustrated, desire for clear thinking. "If the Church should comply it would seem that an assent to the confessions of faith is not essential to membership. It would imply that the doctrine of the Lord's divinity is less essential than it is." (History repeats itself as I write.) The decision pressed less hard on Dan Huntington than on his deeply devout and sympathetic wife, Elizabeth Phelps, a woman of rare quality, of high ideals, of passionate self-devotion. The quality of her religion is evident in a prayer she wrote in 1819, at the birth of her seventh son, the future Bishop Huntington:

"In particular would I plead at this time for the precious little one just brought into the world. I have been the means of giving him a sinful corrupt nature. I can do nothing to effect his salvation without the influences of Thy Spirit, O be pleased to help me, and especially dwell in his heart by Thy grace, and suffer him not to go in the way of sin. . . . Thou hast enabled me, O Lord, to wait upon Thee in Thy house and to dedicate him to Thee in Baptism, now may we feel that he is not our own, but may we be careful to bring him up for Thee, who hast so kindly dealt with us."

We smile; but we remember Monica. The language is that of her own day; the prayer antedates by two years the open change to Unitarianism of herself and her husband. Presently we find her reading Channing, Martineau, and the liberal

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*Monthly Magazine*. She devoured eagerly literature in behalf of the abolition of slavery, and she was active in the cause of universal peace. It would seem that she might have been an asset to any Church. But the Church in Hadley, led by relentless logic, dismissed her. More than that, it dealt with her first.

"At regular intervals appeared the officers of the Church, making long visits, searching, questioning, arguing, with the saintly woman whom they held subject to enquiry."

The seventh son, for whom she proffered that earnest prayer, was then nine years old. He recorded in an article written in 1845 his feelings as he saw "a noble hearted and devout woman . . . on account of a deliberate and well weighed change of opinions, followed after, persecuted, threatened, . . . at last roughly excommunicated from a Church of which she had been for years an untiring benefactor, and which her blameless spirit had so long adorned." "The tears and anxieties we used to see with our child's eyes, after those impudent deacons and sly ambassadors . . . had withdrawn from one of those cruel interviews left an impression which will not lose its horribleness while we remember anything. This was in the heart of our old Massachusetts, in the midst of its hills and valleys and free air, some of the loveliest scenery in the world indeed, but not beautiful enough to move and soften the gloomy features of that stern, forbidding, unrelenting Calvinism."

A dark picture. But what intense feeling for the importance of religion agitated those "impudent deacons"! The writer of that paragraph, true to the family type, was himself to break loose from the tradition in which he had been reared, and the pendulum was to swing back once more; but never to Calvinism. The future Episcopal Bishop remained for a long time happy in the Unitarian fold. "It is impossible," he wrote, "that religion built on a dogma or a group of dogmas and not

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on the fact of the life of God manifest in the person and acts of Christ, should represent Christianity." Those were the good days in which few recognized that the assumption of a God to be manifest was the most "dogmatic" of dogmas. . . . Like his mother, young Frederic Dan Huntington fed his mind on Channing and Martineau: "I read them often in the open air, and they are associated with running streams in the woods, with clear hill tops and with wide spaces of earth and sky. To these thoughtful and beloved authors I have always felt more indebted perhaps for arousing the life of my mind and heart, than to any others except the inspired men of the Bible, and Sir Thomas Browne and Burke and De Quincey."

### III

Frederic Dan Huntington went to Harvard. ("Can a man go anywhere else?" one surprised little Boston girl asked another.) In due time he became a Unitarian minister, and settled with his young wife Hannah Dane Sargent in charge of the South Congregational Church, Boston. Here on July 23, 1854, was born the future founder of Religious Orders in the United States. It seems natural that the event should have occurred while his father was in the sanctuary: "When I returned from Church this morning, I found myself the father of a fourth child, a third son"—one baby son had died. "Of course when we remember how our little Charlie was snatched from our arms. . . . our joy must be chastened. . . . But we are not the less truly happy for that. We ought to feel the Father nearer, and Heaven more natural. To the glory of the one, and a wise preparation for the other, may this child live, so long as he is permitted to stay in this world."

So, through all changing creeds, the tradition of piety can endure. "This child" was to follow the family habit, of "in-

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difference to precedent and disregard of authority." But "the tendency to individualize" was to take a turn with him which would have bewildered his grandfather and all his earlier forbears, for it bore him back into the full stream of that Catholic and authoritarian tradition from which they all, in their several ways, had revolted. The pendulum obeys an unchanging rhythm, and to return requires as much courage as to go on. Both processes are necessary, in the dialectic of history. That the thrill of the pioneer can be found as well in submission as in revolt is known today by the students of a great western university, through their rediscovery of Thomas Aquinas; for rediscovery of ancient sanctities and reassertion of discarded values may be as great an adventure as breaking new trails.

The "joy of the return" was to be known before long by the father of James Huntington; and James was to carry yet further the usual backward sweep. Meantime, the birth of the baby almost coincided with change in the family's outer fortunes, for in 1855 Harvard College gave the Unitarian minister a call he could not refuse, to become preacher in the College Chapel, and Plummer Professor of Christian Morals. In September of that year accordingly the family moved to Cambridge, and "Jamie's" first six years were spent in the academic atmosphere charmingly described in the *Memoirs* of his father. He was too little to have the fine culture and the democratic friendliness mean much to him, so we must not dwell on the picture of that life. The rising interest in science and in the liberal arts was keenly shared by Professor Huntington. George, the older son of the family, then thirteen years old, gained from Professor Francis J. Child who lived for two years in the Huntington House, his life-long love of Dante; and "the beloved naturalist" Agassiz imbued him with scientific ardor. "The family life in the Cambridge home was a delight-

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ful one," wrote Arria Huntington. "Their father read aloud beautifully; he loved to help his children in choosing their poetic selections to learn for school; he encouraged them in all sports and healthy games, skating, riding, walking"; they had the joy of many pets, of long drives through the lovely country which then surrounded Cambridge. As for small Jamie, youngest of the family till a little sister was born in 1859, he was a singularly lovable child, sweet-tempered, sociable, and gay. And Mrs. Sessions writes, in precious manuscript notes put at the disposal of the biographer: "He developed a phenomenal memory at a very early age, caught not only echoes of song and verse, but religious phrase and expression, and of that there was much in the family life. Their father taught all his children to repeat both secular and religious poetry, and writes to his sister Bethia when Jamie was not quite six years old, 'I have been reading aloud to Jamie, who shows great sensibility, dear child, to spiritual impressions. He has learned of his own accord the Apostles' Creed and repeats it when we say it, as well as the Lord's Prayer.' "

It does not appear that Jamie was ever naughty. But he was human. When everybody made a fuss about his baby sister Ruth, "he drew up very soberly to his mother's side, and said to her in a low voice: 'Mama, do you like ME?'"

Dr. Huntington became an outstanding figure, not only in the University, where he did much to broaden and also to deepen the spiritual life, but also in the whole religious world of his day. He was editing a magazine, he was writing books, he was delivering lectures and addresses. A Congregational review stated that "Professor Huntington occupies a public position of incalculable power over the religious convictions of the American people." But the time approached when the family instinct asserted itself; and with him as later with his son, the way home was the way back. To be sure, his Uni-

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tarianism, like that of his mother, had consisted largely in revolt from the current predilection for dwelling on the terrors of the Lord. While he was still a Harvard student, he wrote a friend of his disgust in attending a meeting where the organ thundered out accompaniment to the lines:

“See the storms of vengeance gathering  
O'er the path you dare to tread.  
Hear the awful thunder rolling  
Loud and louder o'er your head.  
Turn, O sinner!”

His own preaching, abundant in tenderness as it was searching in appeal, dwelt not on the terrors but on the loving kindness of the Eternal. As to his constructive theology, it could hardly be distinguished from orthodoxy. As early as 1851 the trend of his thought is clear:

“We are as unable as we are undesirous to doubt that in regard to that deep wide line that distinguishes the Infinite from the finite, and the Divine from the human, Christ the Redeemer does not stand by His nature on the human side. We discover no way by which an estranged lost family on earth . . . could be raised, restored and justified, but by One who should bring the Deity to earth, while He lifts man up toward Deity. The Redeemer must make God manifest in the flesh.”

Catholic theologians would hardly feel dissatisfied with that statement, yet it found easy room within the liberal Unitarianism of Channing. Dr. Huntington came, however, to be more and more convinced that his spiritual home was elsewhere. The break was accomplished without bitterness; but the course of the very deep spiritual conflict of those years, and the reactions it excited, may be followed with keen sympathy. Those who care for the ever-varying, never-exhausted drama of the interior life will place the story of Bishop Hunt-

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ington's conversion on their library shelves, beside that of Newman, of Augustine,—shall we add, of Aldous Huxley, Middleton Murry and Heywood Broun?

In 1856 we find him taking a first step toward freedom, as he writes: "Our own aversion to the Unitarian name, and our desire to be independent of it, arises partly from a belief that the term is not a description of our religious convictions on important points, and partly from a settled distrust of the general influence of the sectarian measures it covers, rather than from any want of friendship for its men, or of appreciation of its freedom." When he wrote like that, the end was sure. "My first discontent," he wrote later, "was with the denial of the Divinity and the redemption of our Lord, and this was followed by a gradually established belief in the Trinity, and in the Divine organization and authority of the Church, apostolical and primitive."

An Anglo-Catholic could hardly demand a more explicit statement! Yet Bishop Huntington during all his clerical life was accounted a Low Churchman. Perhaps the distinctions among Anglicans are more on the surface than we think.

## IV

In December 1859, the "decisive publication" was made in a volume of sermons; on January 19, 1860, against many protests he resigned from the position at Harvard. He and his family began at once attendance at old Christ Church, Cambridge; we find the father writing wisely and tenderly to his son George, with the gift of a Prayer Book, concerning the unfamiliar etiquette, so to speak, to be observed in an Episcopalian service. "In becoming accustomed to this mode of worship,—so venerable, impressive, and beautiful,—you will find much assistance in *Beginning* with an entire com-

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pliance with *All* the usages of the place." Things moved swiftly; the communion with which he now united himself gave him eager welcome. On March 22, 1861, he was ordained to the priesthood; already he had entered on his duties as rector of the newly-formed parish of Emmanuel. He moved with his family to Boston, and served as rector of that parish till called to the Bishopric of Central New York in 1869.

They were nine fruitful years. How deeply his conversion stirred the religious world, is vividly suggested by the letters sent him, bearing distinguished names of the past: Horace Bushnell, Ray Palmer, Nehemiah Adams, Edward Park, Mark Hopkins, Mühlenberg, A. Cleveland Cox. It was an example and a sign of a new phase just then developing in the religious life of New England. The Episcopal Church, long a sadly static and respectable body, was entering a fuller life, which Dr. Huntington himself was to have large share in forming. That Church diverged, mildly but distinctly, both from the Unitarianism in which religion of the generation just before had probably found its best and most living expression, and from orthodox Protestantism. But Dr. Huntington could never, then or later, have thought of himself otherwise than as a Protestant. It is hardly too much to say that Roman Catholics were as remote from his field of vision as Mohammedans; he had joined the "Protestant Episcopal Church," and that communion had as yet no scruples as to its legal appellation. His daughter describes its temper with carefully chosen words:

"In those days, its character was distinguished to a marked degree by a strict conservatism, a dignified respectability, an acknowledged exclusiveness. It stood with emphasis for what it represented, but there was little concern for Church extension. The Head of the diocese (Bishop Eastburn) adhered strongly to the tenets of doctrine which are distinctly Pro-

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testant. The ecclesiastical matters which most occupied his mind were connected with what was then known as the Tractarian Movement just coming into prominence, and which aroused his intense opposition.”<sup>1</sup>

It is a tribute alike to Frederic Huntington and to the soul of the Church, that in such an ecclesiastical body as this he could find, as he did, spiritual romance and abiding inspiration. He had responded, not to a temporary situation, but to an abiding life, present in the great Liturgy hallowed by the association of ages:

“Rich fields, through which the river of souls has rushed,  
Long, long, to find their passion held and hushed  
In the breast of the great sea to which it fares.”<sup>2</sup>

Much later, in 1886, he published in *The Forum* a full account, still well worth reading, of his spiritual pilgrimage. Maurice above all had been the master of his mind; but it was the Church herself, in the majestic and unquenchable power of her worship and her creedal pronouncements, which drew and held him. He had a special devotion to the solemn dramatic rhythm of the Church Year, with its strange power to shape and control the movements of the inner life in the believer. In Emmanuel Parish his own insights were communicated with rare completeness to his ardent and eager congregation. Seldom can there have been a parochial life richer in all outgoing ministries, in illumination and in guidance of its members. In such a parish, little James Huntington grew up.

Were the insights fostered complete? Anglo-Catholics would answer, No. His own journey had hardly brought Dr. Huntington within hailing distance of the special symbols and disciplines which “The Tractarian Movement,” as it was

<sup>1</sup> Arria Huntington, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> Helen Gray Cone. “The Accolade.”

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then called, was offering to the Anglican Church. Bishop Eastburn's opposition to the movement was, as has been noted, "intense," and Episcopalian in Massachusetts were often hardly aware of its existence. Yet this is not wholly true. Waves were reaching even Puritan Boston. As early as 1843, the parish of the Advent had been established, at the incentive of a young physician, Dr. Richard H. Salter. Dr. Salter, who had been a Congregationalist, wrote: "Being dissatisfied with my religious position, my thoughts turned in the direction of the Episcopal Church. . . . I tried the Episcopal Churches in Boston, and found them as conducted little or no better than the Congregational." He investigated further; the ultimate result was the challenging and surprising parish of the Advent. It "introduced many novelties: free pews, cross and candles on the altar, and later a vested choir of men and boys. . . . These were an offense to the Bishop, who condemned them as 'superstitious puerilities.' He refused to visit the parish for Confirmation, till in 1856 the General Convention passed a canon requiring an episcopal visitation at least once in three years." This was four years before the parish of Emmanuel was created, and the Advent remained for years outside the ordinary "Episcopal" consciousness in Boston. It was regarded askance, with mingled awe, fear, and, in some cases, with rather tremulous awareness of attraction; the fear predominated, for it was whispered that auricular confession and other atrocious "Catholic" practices obtained there. How remote its innocent and often lovely habits were from the Protestant consciousness appears amusingly in an interesting letter from Dr. Huntington to his sister Bethia, written during the Christmas season of 1859, at the very point of his great change. He tells how he discovered under his window:

"A picturesque group of singers, pouring out Christmas carols, . . . in music and words wholly peculiar, and beautiful

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exceedingly. At first I was puzzled to make them out. I noticed that whenever they spoke the Name of Jesus they bowed the head. Altogether the effect was remarkable, as if I had been transported back into the ages of old romance and faith. They greeted me with a 'Happy Christmas,' and proved to be the choir of the Church of the Advent. . . . It was as if something from Bethlehem and Fatherland had blended graciously, and floated through the starlit and frosty night to our door."

So came echoes to the future Bishop from what, despite all subsequent history, one may believe to have been his native air. Little Jamie, five years old, was standing beside his father while the carollers sang. A prophetic moment.



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## CHAPTER II

### *OPENING YEARS*

#### I

FOR the next nine years the Huntington family lived in Boylston Street, Boston, facing the Public Gardens, and the record is charming. The first outstanding fact about their life was its joyousness, the second that it was permeated by religion. "We are waiting," says Mrs. Herman, somewhere, "for the spiritual writer who can make the great formative principles of our religion to live for the ordinary man, or rather, who can show them to be fibres of the Tree of Life." There could be no better description of what really occurred in the Huntington family. However Protestant Dr. Huntington may have been, his change of faith affected intimately not only his attitude, but every detail of behaviour. Convictions, to him and his family, never congealed into formulae; they created life, and controlled it. We should realize the intense reality of the faith in which James Huntington grew up, for he never repudiated an iota of it. He was to follow the example of his father and his grandfather in pursuing paths of his own choosing. But unlike rebels of the Byronic or, shall we say, the Nietzschean type, his originality had nothing negative about it. He entered deeper and deeper into the implications of the Trinitarian doctrine which his father professed, and which he, and his, daily translated into such experience as had been its primal source; he was to find this doctrine verified and interpreted in a way of life, a full sacramental philosophy, and an

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enrichment of worship, unfamiliar to the circles in which his youth was passed. But when Dr. Huntington, turning from the intellectual vagueness of Unitarianism, brought his family into greater clarity of vision and fuller perception of the realities enshrined in a corporate and dogmatic faith, he was leading the way for his young son into an order of experience which could be tested and confirmed by much that was familiar to James' childhood, but which could never be denied.

It is pleasant to read about James Huntington's singularly sunny and unshadowed childhood. There were five children: George, the oldest, later a clergyman, would seem to have been an ideal elder brother, delighting to take the younger children to museums, etc., sharing with them the fun of his scientific and literary tastes. Then came Arria,—beautiful, ardent, future leader in social reforms; then James; then the two youngest, Ruth and Mary, not so far apart.

The Civil War followed close on the move to Boston. The little Huntingtons were too young to be agitated by the problems resounding around them, but children so alive must have caught sundry echoes. Dr. Huntington, eagerly devoting himself to his new parish, may never have identified himself actively with the Abolition movement; but he was none the less intensely liberal. His children grew up with social concern as part of their natural inheritance. Bishop Huntington's arraignment of social evils was to grow increasingly definite. It was in one of his later years that he was to say: "Will the fire scorch the Hebrew monopolists only? Will it skip the pews of the nineteenth century capitalists, owners of foul sweating shops, unsanitary tenements, selfishly managed mines, factories and railroads, because the warnings have rung down through eighteen centuries? There are inequalities that the Almighty permits; there are other inequalities which man makes, and God abhors and rebukes." No dead acquiescence

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in the status quo could be expected from a young man whose father had announced in the year of his birth: "I am a member of the Peace Society. A great revolution is going on in the minds of men, one of those revolutions which never go back." In 1870, we find the Bishop lecturing in Providence before this same Society.

"Revolutions never go back"; but sometimes, *pace Marx*, they move slowly. Some of Dr. Huntington's utterances in those fine old American days might have been made today:

"We may build barricades for our prison houses, and plant guns and staves and chains about our victims; we may stigmatize or crucify the prophets that tell us the truth; we may rejoice in every fresh success of cruel usurpations over human freedom; but we cannot thereby stay the advancing steps of retribution; we cannot, by police or militia, by conventions or state books, by certificates of bondage or judicial forms, press down behind the eastern horizon that ascending sun which shall bring in the day of our judgment."<sup>1</sup>

The passage is not a protest against the Totalitarian State; it is not a statement made by the Civil Liberties Union in 1940; it is Frederic Dan Huntington, not yet Bishop, in 1851, three years before his son James was born.

It would be hard to exaggerate what James Huntington owed to his father. "The devotion of father and son to one another from James' babyhood on," writes Mrs. Ruth Huntington Sessions, "was so innate, so deep, such a blending of their two personalities, that from the earliest days of the child's life as memory recalls it there was far more than a common bond or a mere family relation. The boy unconsciously used even his father's own phrases, and in early letters we find a similarity between the childish expressions and the utterances of the man; a common form and exchange of thought, a mutual

<sup>1</sup> Arria Huntington, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

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susceptibility to spiritual experience, which gave evidence of a more than ordinary relationship." As to his formal schooling, a minute account is offered in Father Huntington's auto-biographical notice, written in his fair fine hand, in the Harvard Class Book in 1875; and it is pretty to find him carefully chronicling the names of his every teacher in sundry private and public schools. His chief preparation for College was at the Roxbury Latin School, but his studies there were interrupted by two years of study at home where, he says, "I began to study Latin with my father in 1865," and by a year at a Church School established by Bishop Huntington in Manlius near Syracuse. For a general picture of these years, we cannot do better than to go on quoting the manuscript Memoirs of his sister Ruth.

"Looking back at the growing boy whose future held such promise for the Church and the after world, we see a very normal youngster, full of life and the joy of living, with a love of beauty and a tireless activity. He entered heartily into youthful sports, displayed creative instincts and responded in acquisitive participation to opportunities for exploring and investigating; was popular with his young comrades and companionable with the elders of the family. His father devoted many Saturday half-holidays to taking the boys about, visiting factories, printing shops, museums, libraries. The Natural History Rooms on Boylston Street, full of interesting collections, always delighted them, and supplied them with a store of information.

"The table talk at the Rectory was always animated. Every member had his part and privilege in general conversation. But the younger children did a good deal of listening and there were distinguished guests now and then. Even if discussions were over their heads at times, the boys and girls learned much that contributed to their training and education,

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for the younger Huntingtons heard no meaningless small talk, gossip, or acrid criticism of others. When they brought home school-friends, the father and mother received these as courteously as their own personal friends. Jamie was free to mingle in the general conversation and describe exciting events at school, on the ball-ground, among the group of boys whose enthusiasm over their games and victories never lost its spontaneity. Perhaps the reciprocal companionship of old and young may have contributed to the facile exchange of confidence which in his early priesthood gave the young man the clue to many a boy's personality when working with the gamins of the East Side."

## II

"The rector took his family each summer to the farm in Hadley which had been his birthplace"; and summers were perhaps more important than winters in the life of the growing boy. The historic sense in which most Americans are notably deficient was to play a determining part with him. Such sense was instinctively acquired in the old homestead, looking off over the broad "Forty Acres" where his family had been settled since 1753. "The outward frame and scene survive still, with nearly unchanged features," wrote Arria Huntington in 1906; "domicile, old-fashioned furniture, open fire-places, and andirons, the clock that has ticked the seconds of a century and closed many a frolic of children with the stroke of nine; garret, cellar, Indian relics, elm-trees, garden, well, orchard, corn-fields; the brook behind the hill, the indoor heirlooms of six generations, all invested and hallowed with traditions and reminiscences that repeople every nook and corner of the place, and bring tears to the eyes." The children must have learned with eager sympathy of little Betsy Porter,

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whose father, builder of the original house, had been massacred by the Indians in the last of the French and Indian Wars. The remarkable Journal of this vigorous great-grandmother of theirs, a lively leader in the religious life of her time, would have been their delight as they grew up. No less vivid, and nearer to their sympathies, were the records of the grandmother and her husband. By the time of those long joyous summers when the future Bishop's children returned to Hadley, echoes were faint from the spiritual conflicts which had led their grandparents into Unitarianism, and their father back into the historic Church from which their remoter forbears had revolted; but they must have been dimly aware of the amazingly intense part played by religious forces in the American story. What thoughts were in the mind of young James Huntington presently, when he scratched on the window-sill of the "Prophet's Window" looking out over those wide fields to the sunset, lines from Arthur Hugh Clough suggestive of prophetic glory in the past? (Clough, by the way, had been living at Cambridge in his father's time.)

"And not through Eastern windows only  
When night is done, comes in the light:  
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!  
But Westward, look, the land is bright."

The boy's amazing, but not always accurate memory is amusingly illustrated by the fact that he misquotes the second line, for Clough had written:

"When daylight comes, comes in the light."

In later years, busy with such mediaeval revival as seemed to him an earnest of a coming day, Father Huntington often returned for brief rest to this austere little attic room; and well may he have felt a special meaning in his early love of that grand quatrain.

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Arria Huntington's account of life at Hadley is too lovely to omit: "The house was one of abounding hospitality, maintained with patriarchal dignity and the simple habits of Puritan inheritance. While the Head of the household spent long hours a day at his desk, . . . he found leisure for long drives with his family and guests exploring every road and byway through the valley and across the fields. In the haying season, he did the work of one able-bodied laborer in the field, entering into the occupation with a zest and ardor which never abated. . . . After supper on a beautiful evening all would gather on the quaint 'stoop' along the length of the house to the rear, to enjoy the gorgeous tints of sunset across the river, to listen to the sounds dying out in the village street, beyond its banks, to watch the purple glow fading out into darkness on the mountains and the first star twinkling in the heavens. After the lamps were lighted came the letters and newspapers, a little reading aloud, and bed-time."<sup>1</sup>

It was characteristic of Dr. Huntington that he never craved wider contact with the world: travel in Europe, Asia, Africa, such as forms the normal summer holiday of every other American nowadays. Hadley was enough for him; and his son was to be a little like him. In 1860 the father wrote to a friend:

"I cannot allow that there is anything more lovely, more perfect of its kind, than this beloved old homestead where I was born; with the windings of the river, the 'green meadows and still waters' of an earthly Paradise, the flowing outlines of the distant Western hills, the splendid urn-shaped and sheaf-shaped elms around us and over us, the woods not far away at the East, and the large grassy yards and hayfields on every side."

No one today can sit on that long stoop behind the noble old house and watch the changing lights over those peaceful

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

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fields without catching many an echo from the past. What good talk went on there! For if the Huntingtons did not travel much, the culture of the civilized world came to their doors. Dr. Huntington saw to it that his girls as well as his boys were well-grounded in the literatures of modern Europe. Arria when she had grown up spoke and read easily every modern language except Spanish; Mary was most at home in French. George was not only a ripe Dante scholar but a good classicist, and as for Jamie, who was perhaps not so good at languages as the others, he liked to make his small sisters dance to the intoning of the Greek alphabet.

He was a merry little boy; he was also very religious, with an unaffected natural piety. "It was he who in childhood when his parents were absent would read the service from the Prayer-Book to his little sisters, he who learned the catechism most easily and understandingly, he who placed the Prayer-books at home services and made the responses most promptly." On one occasion he was horrified and deeply grieved, when the more enterprising of the two usurped his prerogative, scampered upstairs to don her father's night-shirt, mounted a hassock and began swiftly to declaim: "The Lord is in His holy temple:" "Mama, Mama, I could not make her stop!" wailed Jamie. "I *Told* her that only boys could do that." He could be very disciplinary when need arose. Once the same enterprising Ruth, who tells the tale delightfully, persuaded the smaller Molly that they must absolutely take up life on a desert island. What would they eat? Mussels dug from the sand. Now there really was an island, a fragment of an abandoned bridge, in the middle of the Connecticut River. Jamie, paddling to the other side to do an errand, acceded to their request, took them with him, and left them there. Alas, there seemed no mussels to dig; two

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matches went out; it was a couple of forlorn small damsels whom the big brother picked up on his return. When they reached home, their mother rebuked him sharply: the only time in his sister's memory that he was ever scolded. "But, Mama," he replied, "I thought it would be so good for them to learn for themselves." Forecast of future technique with his novices?

### III

In 1869, Dr. Huntington became Bishop of the newly-created diocese of Central New York, and the family moved to Syracuse. "Jamie," fifteen years old, wrote to his father two weeks after the consecration: "My Lord, (official); Dear Papa, (filial) . . . Dearest Papa, May the Good Lord help you and strengthen you to do the work that is set before you." George, the oldest son, now ordained to the priesthood, was left behind in his first parish at Malden, Mass. James, after a year in his father's Diocesan School in Manlius where he was graduated at the head of his class, lived for a year, while finishing his preparation for College, in his grandmother Sargent's beautiful old home in Roxbury. He then, in 1871, entered Harvard, graduating in 1875.

The family continued to spend its summers at the Hadley Farm, where existence was as stimulating as it was gay. The growing boy was evidently overflowing with the joy of life. He was the moving spirit in all the fun. He invented games, to the delectation of the many young guests going and coming; he was devoted to sports and puzzles, he carried clippings of little jokes to retail in his pockets, he could rattle off non-sense rhymes by the yard; indeed the *Bab Ballads*, the *Biglow Papers*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*

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were family classics. Father Huntington never lost his taste for rhymes; it is told how in later years, confronting an audience of working girls, he solemnly declaimed:

“The gum-chewing girl and the cud-chewing cow  
Are alike; yet there is a difference somehow:  
What can it be? Ah I see it now!  
'Tis the thoughtful look on the face of the cow.”

Like young Shelley and many another budding genius, he was fascinated by the borderland between science and magic; he gave many an exhibition of parlor tricks, with a small sister as accomplice. He would come home from the holidays with a big bag of books, that would tumble out on the floor and be eagerly seized by the always intellectually avid family. House parties developed endless histrionic talent. One of the carriage houses had a loft seemingly made for dramatic purposes where brilliant entertainments were staged: Lord Ullin's daughter, with Jim as boatman, sculling frantically with a broom over the edge of a large wash-tub, till the luckless bridal party was engulfed by a sheet. Or Jim as young Lochinvar, a gay Scotch plaid thrown over his shoulders, cavorted across the stage astride a saw-horse with his bride behind him, and actually got her out of the window and to the ground with the aid of a ladder, while the wedding party presented a tableau of rage and despair. Scenes from Dickens were dramatized, in one of which Jim “featured” as Dick Swiveller, lying in bed playing the flute, or devouring “carbuncular potatoes,” as he gave the toast, “May this moment be the worst of our lives.”

There was cool courage behind his high spirits. Once, on a picnic party climbing up a mountain stream, a girl slipped and fell into a deep pool. The boy with her, Jim's college chum,

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leaped in but could not swim. James, turning to see two sinking heads, plunged in, reached them with several strokes under water, and pulled them back to safety. It was a feat that could hardly have been accomplished in cold blood. "The boy was beloved by the neighbors and the farm workers. He seemed to have a special gift for getting on with all types of personality," and the record is rich in instances of such outgoing sympathies as were a chief source of his power in later life. He patiently gratified, for instance, the bewildered desires of a subnormal old cousin, who puzzled every one by pleading for a recitation of "Billy Bow," "No-trawy-no-tum,"—James's intuition knew what was wanted; to the satisfaction of his hearer he declaimed the great soliloquy, about that "bourne" from which "no traveller returns." The poor old man had a passion for hearing "Dust to Dust," over and over. James would repeat the Burial Service. "The strong ringing voice reciting from memory the heroic phrases of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians could be heard, while the vacant eyes of the listener were fixed upon the speaker's face. We little thought how many times the young interpreter would be called in later years to clarify the Heavenly message itself for wistful souls."

Both before and after he went to College, the young man's greatest pleasure was in long country tramps, preferably alone, though sometimes with a friend. Or, striking across lots, he would join at night the Bishop and his women folk who were driving into Vermont or New Hampshire, but "the solitary trips were by his own acknowledgment the most satisfying," writes his sister. "He made them oftenest in late August or early September, starting off with a small pack on his shoulder and a staff cut from a sturdy sapling, with its bark stripped and its light surface finished and polished as his older brother

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liked to make it. A rough blue flannel shirt, an old cap on the head of close-clipped wavy locks, were his tramping outfit. Often his sisters would start him on one of these excursions by rowing him across the river to Hatfield; they treasured the recollection of his boyish figure as he turned to wave a goodbye from the top of the bank, and strode away Westward toward the higher slopes. Those walking trips were an inspiration and refreshment; there was a sense of exhilaration in the gradual mount, the widening outlook, the deepening wood shades and the upland pastures, his own possession for the time; a vantage ground from which surveys of prosperous cultivation and glimpses of lofty peaks brought impulses of gratitude and praise to the Giver of all good gifts for the strength and power to enjoy and to plan for future endeavor. He was wont to say, in later years, that every such experience was a part of the preparation and training of which he was even then, in his youth, deeply conscious. His 'contacts'—that curiously inadequate word was not used so familiarly in those days—with the country people in schools and villages was part of that same preparation."

Obviously, James Huntington's impulse was not chiefly athletic. Indeed, he never seems to have cared much for sports; one does not picture him then or later spending much time on those doubtless excellent and healthy activities, football and golf, even though he was joyously sympathetic to the prowess in them of the boys at his beloved Kent School. Neither, in these long tramps, did he crave the possibly finer excitement of the ambitious mountaineer. He never tried to scale inaccessible heights in the Himalayas or the Alps or Alaska. He liked to look down, as his sister said, on the rich cultivated lands of his own home country; but his was also the joy of the heights, in which soul and body are refreshed as in no other way, and

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contemplation and action blend. Such thoughts were surely his as were known to the first sons of St. Francis in their "*libertà Francescana*," while they sought the mountain solitudes of Umbria, never remote from human dwellings, or joyously shared the labors of the fields. Of James as of Francis, pleasant stories are told about intercourse with country folk, unconventional and happy: "He lodged at farm houses rather than at inns and this brought him more intimate acquaintance with rural hosts, and sundry amusing adventures." But over the deeper experiences of the spirit waiting ever in the earth's high places, a veil is drawn.

He had rather more pleasure than his father in travel. A year after he left college, he took with a friend, Merwin, a walking trip in Scotland, whence they returned enthusiastic. He was repeatedly to visit England, he took keen joy in Italy, and he responded to the inspiration of the great mountains of our own Far West. His farthest range was in a visit in the autumn of 1923 to the Mission of his Order in Liberia, and we learn of his awed delight in the great African forests, so different from the friendly New England woods of his boyhood. But in no one of these wanderings was far travel undertaken for its own sake. His home country sufficed him, rich in sweet human values yet offering ample opportunities for withdrawal into the loneliness that is no loneliness to the aspirant for solitude.

Often in later years, when living by deliberate choice among the distasteful crowds, the smells, the racket, of lower New York, James Huntington must have retired into the unfailing refreshment of his memories. We can never understand him unless we keep in mind his country background. He was to become a leader in the art of communion with God in the language of such ordered liturgy and ritual as men

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through all Catholic ages have found necessary aids in an approach to the Eternal. These, the America of his fathers had minimized till they were all but lost; one of his chief achievements was in helping to restore them, and he was to revive much more of the ancient heritage than had come within his father's ken. But the man whose best pleasure had been in these long solitary tramps could never have been confined in his spirit within ecclesiastical horizons.



### CHAPTER III

#### *THE COLLEGIAN: AND AFTER*

##### I

EVEN before James Huntington went to College, it seems to have been taken for granted, by himself and everybody else, that he was to follow his father and his elder brother into the ministry. No hint through these years is found of the frequent, one may say the usual, temptations and turmoil of adolescence. The fact is a little startling. There were to be inward sorrows enough later, although unusually deep reticence on his part makes them matter rather of inference than of record. But it would really seem as if in his youth, the joy and zest of life were harmoniously integrated with his religion, all natural pleasures being accepted as sacramental channels for revelation of the divine.

An interesting address to the novices of Holy Cross about the Father Founder whom they hardly knew, by his successor, Father Whittemore, breathes throughout deep love, loyalty, and reverence. But Father Whittemore says that Father Huntington always seemed a little afraid of having a good time. That is certainly not the impression conveyed by the stories of his youth. Never a hint of self-indulgence or of disregard of others appears in these stories, but delightful vigor, untroubled purity, and unrestrained spontaneity, breathe through the record. Had his vows as a Religious imposed a new code on him, or altered his natural disposition? It is possible, for the good is often enemy of the best. He was wont to say,

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reports Father Whittemore, that no New Englander could ever make a good Religious; meaning thereby, thinks his successor, that the New England temperament is over-inclined to "scrupulosity" which is recognized by all the best spiritual authorities as a very bad spiritual disease, too likely to appear in the religious life on the higher ranges. The "Father Founder" was to give an especially acute and definite analysis of that danger, in Retreat, to his Brothers; and it is indubitably a distinctive trait—or taint—in Puritanism. But there is no evidence of it in his early years, with their whole-hearted enjoyment of natural living, their instinctive unselfishness, their response to all fine impulses. A question opens up, on which light may be thrown as we proceed.

He was seventeen years old when he entered Harvard, in 1871. The university of those years was in some ways not so different from that in which his father had served, knowing stimulating contacts, some ten or fifteen years earlier. Several of the fine old figures, representing "The Flowering of New England" were still to be met on the campus: James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Asa Gray, Nathaniel Shaler, Francis J. Childs. Agassiz was in his prime. New men, worthy to rank with these elders, were on the scene: James Freeman Clark had succeeded Dr. Huntington; Henry Adams was assistant professor of History; James Greenough (Latin), George Herbert Palmer (Philosophy) were beginning their long and memorable careers; Charles Eliot Norton appears in James' senior year on an annual appointment which was to prove permanent. Lecturers of distinction were not wanting; there was Emerson, speaking on The Natural History of the Intellect; John Fiske held forth on The Positive Philosophy. In '72-'73, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. was lecturing on Jurisprudence. Under the young President Charles W. Eliot, the university was not likely to deteriorate and the

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methods, if not the objectives, of education, were to be dynamically changed.

James Huntington was always uncritically loyal to his college. He entered whole-heartedly into the College life, and became in due time co-founder of the *Harvard Magenta*, (later more felicitously rechristened the *Harvard Crimson*). Few attentions could have been more welcome to him than the graceful act of Kent School, when in his later years it made him a member of the Harvard Club of New York. He often stayed there and his letters actually breathe satisfaction in using the address; everyone in the Club, to the last employee, viewed him with a special devotion. Father Whittemore complains that there was even a touch of arrogance to the tone in which he would allude to "Harvard College," in the presence of less fortunate persons who had never shared the privilege of the sacred precincts. At the same time, it must be confessed that there is no evidence of the academic life of the place meaning much to him, nor can much trace be found that it exerted formative influences over his mind. Perhaps the truth is, that despite the array of notables, the university of his day was passing, as to its traditions, through a period of survival rather than of initiation. Van Wyck Brooks may be right when in his keen study of New England he treats the Forties and Fifties rather than the Sixties and Seventies as the time of flowering. Ingeniously and suggestively he applies to New England, including Harvard, Spengler's pattern of the "culture-cycle." The perspective takes us back to the beginnings, to the seventeenth century perhaps, when a homogeneous people, religious, simple, inarticulate, are living close to the soil. Slowly culture develops; flowers, centres in cities; creative impulses appear. But the first initiative fades; the Hawthornes yield to the Henry Jameses; the culture-city of Boston, with its "suburbs," Con-

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cord and Cambridge, is succeeded by the world-city, New York. "Not to press a formula too far," says Van Wyck Brooks, "is not this the story of New England, . . . from the days of Channing and Webster to those of Henry Adams and Barrett Wendell?"

Spengler saw such a development filled with "the presentiment of the end." But let us rather use his own figure, for a cycle moves in spirals, ending to begin once more. If we accept some truth in the cycle pattern, however, we shall discern significance in James Huntington's future change of centre from Boston to New York. Life at Harvard, and in New England, was certainly not to remain stagnant. But it does seem as if the Seventies, in the College and elsewhere, were, to change the figure, a time of ebb tide.

## II

Be this rather melancholy analysis sound or not, it is certain that young James Huntington did not enjoy the academic side of Harvard as much as his elder brother George had done. He was a good, but not a distinguished, student. It is excellent discipline for the academic type of person to realize, albeit ruefully, that the chief quickening a college affords is found by sundry of its most notable sons quite apart from the classroom. How whole-heartedly James entered into other phases of College life is evident from the careful account of himself, already cited, in his Class Book; it seems worth while to quote bits from these autobiographical notes. He is of course answering a questionnaire:

I cannot remember when I did not look forward to a collegiate course, but my Brother's preparation for College in 1860, and his college course, 1860-64, may have turned my mind to it first.

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I was 17 years old on the twenty-third of the month (July) following my entrance examinations.

I have not taught school.

My only difficulties in getting an education have been the lack of any.

I have not been absent above a week during my college course.

I have not been guilty of printing any "book" or "pamphlet," and such articles of mine as have appeared in the college papers deserve no attention with the exception, possibly, of "Failure" in the "Magenta," (Vol. IV, No. 4), and "Cant" in the same paper (Vol. IV, No. 5).

I have received no honors except school prizes scarcely worth mentioning.

I have been a member of the St. Paul's Society, the Institute, Signet. I.K., Football Club, Harvard Boat Club, Weld-Thayer Boat Club, and for a very short time of the V.X. and of the Deu.Verein. I was Secretary, also Orator, of the Institute, Vice-President and President of the St. Paul's Society [This was really his major college interest], President of the I.K., and President and Secretary of the Signet. I served as an Editor on the "Magenta."

He continues, giving the names of his "chums" and room-mates,—Henry Childs Merwin and Charles W. Wetmore. Then comes a statement in which the phrasing has a personal note, that shows the trend of his thinking:

I joined the Catholic Church in the Sacrament of Baptism on the 22nd of October 1854, and ratified the vows of Baptism in the Rite of Confirmation at Emmanuel Church, Boston, Feb. 2nd, 1866.

I have not been in the Army, and of my relatives only one cousin, Mr. Edward Huntington, fought during the war.

I intend to study for the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and I have been helped through college by a scholarship called the Matthews scholarship amounting to \$300.00 a year. The scholarship was established by Mr. Nathan Matthews

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and its funds are drawn from the rent of rooms in Matthews Hall. It is intended for Episcopalian looking towards the ministry.

So far the replies to the Questionnaire; but he goes on with a detailed and not unamusing account of his precise relation to that great organ, the whilom *Magenta*. His anxiety not to claim honors not belonging to him is patent:

There are no facts in my own life that claim public attention but it may correct an error among future college historians if the true originator of the "Magenta" is here stated. The first number of that paper was published [a blank is left. Had he forgotten?] as early as the winter of the college year previous. I remember a conversation between my chum and myself in which he spoke of the need of a new publication, periodically issued, at Harvard, and of what an interesting thing it would be to get up such a magazine or paper. When we came back to college in the autumn of '72, he began to speak of starting a magazine as a possibility, and, accordingly, spoke to other men in his class among whom he found an eagerness to take up such an enterprise and it is possible that a paper would ultimately have been started if my chum had done nothing but, as a fact, he did do something and a great deal and the honor of having originated the Magenta belongs to Henry Childs Merwin, class of '74. For myself, I can claim no such honor for I wrote nothing for the paper for months, and did not become an editor till the following spring. The name "Magenta" however was my suggestion and I chose it as being Harvard's color in imitation of Oxford's magazine called "The Dark Blue." I was then ignorant of the true color of the college, a return to which has lately necessitated the change of the name to "The Crimson."

That is an intriguing statement, about the change in the College color; but it is irrelevant to our story.

Obviously, James' mind was far from torpid during those years, and he was reading eagerly and extensively all the time. In his own home, all the best output of the Victorian age was

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familiar food. Back from Cambridge, he and his mates brought many other books, each with its own challenge; the Russian writers, Tolstoy and Turgenieff; Mallock and George Meredith; Philip C. Hamilton's *Intellectual Life*; and, in the field of theology, *Ecce Homo*, still recalled by men and women of long memories as one of the most stirring and disturbing books of their youth.

Another disturbing work, now wrapped in still deeper oblivion, was a pamphlet by an English clergyman named Pullen: "Modern Christianity a Civilized Heathenism." The work of this rather surprising clergyman was an attack, neither the first nor the last, on the hypocrisies and inconsistencies of the Churches. Its quality appears in its proposed discussion, concerning "Whatever there is in any creed that is worth reciting; not whether this form of Christianity is preferable to that, but whether all forms of Christianity pretending to come from God through Christ are not gross impositions from beginning to end." Lenin or Bob Ingersoll could do no better; and although the author's answer was not as one judges wholly negative, merely to pose the question was to stir deep waters. The book, says Mrs. Sessions, was in its fifth thousand when it reached Harvard. "It was for the young men who read it so fearful a challenge to their thinking and living that many of them were thrown completely off the basis of their religious faith, and led into an agnosticism which was the beginning of a subversive influence among their ranks." Revolt against that easy comfortable aspect of Church life in America which had followed the reaction from Calvinism, along with the growing energy of the Oxford movement, just entering his consciousness, brought about a crisis in James Huntington's thinking. He was assailed by "disastrous doubts and fears." Finally the counsels of that moderate churchman so wisely sympathetic with youth and its questionings, his father, came to the

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rescue. "He saved my life," the son said afterwards. It is a moving story briefly told; one feels a certain relief in learning that Father Huntington's steadily sustained and passionate faith had not been attained in his youth without some normal experience of mind and heart searchings; and Mr. Pullen's book probably did its share in releasing him from the deadly curse of conventional religion.

Except for the Russians, and perhaps for George Meredith, it must be confessed that the intellectual menu offered to eager young palates in the Seventies seems a little flavorless and arid. Scholastic survey of the classics rarely offers excitement or inspiration to young people, though "standard literature" affords ample nutriment for the mature. Youth craves at least the near-contemporary; there was no outstanding prophet in the Seventies, such as Carlyle with his *Sartor Resartus* had been, according to Bishop Huntington's testimony, to the preceding generation. New England itself had not been lacking in prophets; Emerson and the Transcendentalists, with their triumphant vindication of the Spirit through unchurched mysticism, vibrant with releasing power, even if negative in final effect, had stirred deep well-springs of the water of life in thousands of seekers, much as Aldous Huxley, Gerald Heard, and others are stirring such waters for smaller groups today. But mysticism was at a discount in the New England of these later years. Mild surviving Unitarianism, farther and farther from orthodoxy, but rather ethical than mystical, was the chief type of religion outside the historic Churches; and in these, too, the crust was mostly frozen above those living waters. Yet without fresh mystical inspiration no civilization can indefinitely survive. In New England, such was to come before long from various unexpected and sometimes contradictory directions; James Huntington himself

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was to play a leading part in restoring such consciousness of the higher mysteries of "this mysterious universe" as flows from the great stream of Catholic tradition. Whether he was technically a mystic is open to question; but no man of his generation had more conscious and contagious experience of fellowship with the Living God.

During his college years, religious interests were the focus of his thoughts and activities, as they had been from his childhood. Scientific agnosticism of the Spencer and Huxley type was still in the air; as the years passed he was consistently keen on scientific discoveries. Always he insisted on viewing such discoveries as an authentic revelation of truth, always was anxiously concerned to square them with his religious beliefs. He was firmly resolved on reconciling not only ascertained facts but outstanding and convincing scientific speculation, with dogmatic theology; and he succeeded to his own satisfaction. The worst challenge to his faith did not come, however, from a scientific quarter, but from the feebleness and inadequacy, at times even from the seeming disloyalty, of the Church.

And since he was a Churchman, envisaging the situation not from without but from within, it behooved him to do something about it. Corrective activity on his part was not to be lacking. "In those days," writes his sister, "there were few writers with the exception of Charles Kingsley who tackled the social inequalities of the time; those subjects were yet to make their appeal to the Christian Church. But as a part of that preparation which was ever in his thoughts, the young man himself was always alert and anxious for light on the humanitarian movements and great needs of the day, and shared the interests of his father in those studies and experiments which, emanating from England, mostly, began at that

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time to arouse the Church to a sense of its duties toward the workers and their wrongs; a long slow process."

All his letters home as a student witness to religious solicitudes. The St. Paul's Society, of which he was President, was composed of students of the Episcopal Church; he kept in touch with various phases of Church work. As was natural to his father's son, his religious interests had already extended not only to sociological thinking but to practical social service. In view of his keen later concern over industrial education, it is interesting to find him writing home after a visit to a Methodist boys' school, Pine Farm, which he describes with zest: "Oh how much good such an institution can do! Why is our Church the last to do such work? For myself, though I know that could never be, I could hardly wish a position I should more enjoy, despite all the trouble and disappointment, than teaching and training just such boys. And what Christian body is better fitted for it than our own part of the Catholic Church, where superstition does not endanger, and cold stiffness, bare walls, and unattractive services do not hinder or alienate? But others do the work imperfectly or wrongly and we wait."

That note points to his future. Another, struck in a letter to his mother, finds no later parallel: "It does seem as if this increasing and deepening cry for a united Church must lead to something." So far as evidence goes, movements toward Church unity, especially those looking in a Protestant direction, were always to leave him cold. Sensitively conscious of the wealth of imaginative beauty and spiritual success preserved in the Anglican heritage, he was content further to explore the path on which his father had gone a little way, concentrating his effort on restoring to his own communion a Catholic order of thought and worship. "I have asked the Bishop to let me use the *De Profundis* instead of the *Canticles*

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in the service," he writes his mother in his junior year, as he plans for the devotions he is to conduct on Ash Wednesday for the St. Paul's Society.

### III

Unless during the brief period of spiritual conflict already described, James Huntington's solemn and tranquil expectation of entering the priesthood had never wavered. In the spring of his freshman year he was writing his father: "The bells are ringing for church, but I must stop to thank you with all my heart for your letter. . . . You will never know in this world how much your many letters mean to me, and even apparently unimportant messages have, by the help of the Holy Ghost I believe, helped me in my life. I hope I am making this choice for the right reasons,—the desire to fulfil my Baptismal vows. It is very hard to tell whether vain notions do not form part of the motives, but I hope that the ideas of self sacrifice I have now, however obtained at first, may be sanctified as I realize them in my life. This is of course for Mother as well as you, and my earnest prayers are for you both."

Accordingly after his graduation he began at once his theological studies, with his father, at St. Andrews' Divinity School in Syracuse. Before he was graduated from this school, he was ordained deacon, and was advanced to the priesthood in 1880. His father had put him in charge of Calvary Mission, a small church built some years earlier in an outlying district of Syracuse. The communicants were largely recruited from German and English workers in near-by garment factories, many of whom had brought Church connections with them to this country. The Huntington girls with their friends had been active in starting the Mission. Ruth, sixteen years old and

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tall for her age, was head of the Girls Club, which was to become the third branch of the Girls Friendly Society in America; her sister Arria had started the second. Ruth and James now devoted themselves together to the little Mission, and their enterprise was full of gaiety and of spiritual romance; the kind of romance that has more fun in it than any other.

It would be a pity not to give Mrs. Sessions' account in her own words:

"The brother and sister worked together, two enthusiastic young people, indifferent to cold or stormy weather as they climbed the hill on which the Chapel stood. Often the narrow path made it necessary for them to travel in single file, turning to pelt one another with snow-balls, laughing, and saluting the old night-watchman, who loved to have a bit of young life break in upon his lonely round. They had to be on hand at the church about an hour before service, to look after the fires, ring the bell, and put the Prayer-Books out. One Sunday night when the thermometer was below zero and they had decided to have Evening Prayer in the basement Sunday School room because it contained the furnace, they found the gas pipes frozen; no lights, save the red glare from a bed of coals. James went out to see what he could do, and persuaded a proprietor of a little store to open it and let them have some candles. . . . With the aid of a few large nails, they managed to affix ninety to the unfinished beams on both sides of the room. Two stood in bottles on a small table used as a reading desk. The place was well-lighted when the congregation appeared. Two of the men were detailed to watch lest any conflagration occur.

" 'There,' said the young priest as he extinguished the illumination afterward: 'This is probably the most ritualistic service that has ever taken place, or ever will, in Calvary Church.' " (Not a correct prophecy, adds his sister.) Activi-

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ties there were prentice work for what he was soon to be undertaking.

The dozen or more boys in his Bible Class were devoted to him, and he to them. His sorrow and sense of responsibility were keen when one of them was arraigned before a police court. He accompanied the offender, and became his security for a probation period, in which the lad made good; a raising of standards in the little community came gradually about. The brothers and sisters were more or less absorbed into its social life, . . . took the young people to entertainments and became their confidantes and comrades.

His first preaching was done at Calvary, and it began with extemporaneous addresses at evening services. He planned to have these very short, fifteen minutes being the limit set. "He instructed his sister, who played the little organ, to keep track of the time used. His watch was enclosed in a hunting case, and its lid shut with a loud click. She was instructed to close it forcibly at the end of twelve minutes, thus giving him warning, and time to wind up his discourse. The first few trials were successful; but as time went on he became more and more interested in the development of his theme, so that he missed the premonitory click. Finally his timekeeper was moved to try the effect of a violent cough. Even this only worked once, and after something of an altercation, the method was abandoned, as the young divine realized that he must develop an independent technique. The rapt listening of his congregation was all too tempting."

An amusing reminiscence; do ardent speakers ever develop an infallible "technique" to ensure brevity? Father Huntington's congregations continued to the end of his life to listen "rapt," for although according to all testimony he was not so eloquent or finished a preacher as his father, he had the quality that entralls. And yet, critical or impatient minds, slow to

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emotion, were forced to confess that a little too frequently he tended to the redundant.

The two young people, with mutual enthusiasm, devoted much of their time to the building up of a rich service. Protestant worship, even in the Episcopal Church, had been notably averse to recognizing "the beauty of holiness." Its stark appeal, centering in the sermon, had been to conscience and intellect, the imagination being suspect as a soldier in the service of the Father of Lies. One is glad that through the United States Imagination, that elusive, but mighty spirit, now Puck, now Archangel, is today enlisted by all Christian communions except the Quakers in the service of God. In those times the change which the dull conventionality of the Episcopal Church and the dying asceticisms of Puritanism combined to invite, was going on against curiously fierce opposition. One influence drawing Bishop Huntington to the Episcopal Church had been his sensitiveness to the values of a varied liturgical heritage and particularly to the noble ordered rhythms in the cycle of the Church Year. Both in Emmanuel Parish and in his Diocese he discreetly emphasized this heritage in accordance with historic tradition; he would certainly have no sympathy with such vagaries as that of a certain minister about this time who announced that for practical reasons of house-cleaning Good Friday would be observed that year the week after Easter. He was a man of the middle way, cautious and indisposed to extremes. But in a little mission chapel, the love of beauty might have free play.

"There were no conservatives in Calvary Parish, in fact, the people themselves were deeply interested. The church achieved its first altar-cloth, green with handsome gold embroidery; friends sent beautiful altar linen. Candles were not introduced till later, however; they still represented a ritual somewhat more extreme than the Diocese of Central New

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York had embraced. But we had bookmarks to mark the seasons in varied colors, and the candles went to sick-beds with a smaller Cross, the Bishop's own, the chronicler thinks. And then came the training of a boy choir; a great pleasure." Enthusiasm for musical development would have been peculiarly grateful to the Bishop, who was himself versed as few of his contemporaries were in sacred music and in hymnology. He may have been amused at the passion of his children for the Apocrypha, which they discovered with holy glee. Mrs. Sessions' own feeling for music appears in her fond and prolonged dwelling on this aspect of the work at Calvary. "By that time the great oratorios were being sung by choruses all over the country. The Calvary choir could not do very much of this except at Christmas time, but on Christmas Eve it went about, a load of young people chaperoned by their rector, singing carols under the windows of the hospitals, and winding up with supper at the Bishop's." Did faint memories stir in the rector's mind of the long-ago evening when a little boy in Cambridge had clung to the side of a father at once delighted and perplexed by the strange yet fascinating behaviour of a reverent choir from the Advent?

Below zeal for restoring beauty to holiness, below all devotion to practical human needs, profounder impulses were at work with James Huntington. They were to drive him into a solitary path, where the love and trust of his father never failed him, but where understanding halted, puzzled and hesitant. In 1881 his sister Ruth went to Germany to study music. On her return, later in the same year, she found that her brother with two young men of his own age was living among the tenements of the East Side of New York. That in itself was not strange. They were working in a little parish of the Holy Cross conducted by the Sisters of St. John Baptist; and the situation called for just the sort of loving parochial

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ministrations that he and she had practised together at Calvary; and here, too, the people ministered to were mostly German folk of simple extraction. What was strange was the mode of life. For the young men had in a way separated themselves from the normal life of their families and kindred; they lived under severe self-imposed restraints, wearing an unusual garb and shaping their time according to a measured hourly rule of meditation and prayer; they remained for the most part silent.

James Huntington had entered on the monastic life.



## CHAPTER IV

### *THE MONASTIC VOCATION*

#### I

WHO shall say from what deep inward roots rose the force impelling James Huntington to his new path? The recapture of values long discarded, through the slow penetration of the Protestant Episcopal Church by Catholic ideals and practices, was in process all around him; but from sympathy with such tendencies, to embracing a monastic vocation is a far cry. We can trace the exact moment when his sympathies clarified into purpose; it was on the occasion of a Retreat given by Canon Knox Little at St. Clements', Philadelphia. While attending this Retreat, "partly," as we are told, "from curiosity, partly from devotion," he heard the call. On the way back to New York he found that this same call had sounded in the ears of another young priest, Robert W. Dod, grandson of Admiral Stockton, who was at that time serving as curate at the Mission of the Holy Cross in New York conducted by the Sisters of St. John Baptist. Together the two young men formed and carried out their eager plans; soon they were joined by a third, the Rev. James G. Cameron, who had been working among the Indians on the Onondaga Reservation in the diocese of Bishop Huntington.

In the Church of England, Sisterhoods were well established; and the Society of St. John the Evangelist, founded in 1866 in England by Richard Meux Benson, was already storming the central citadel of the old Puritan tradition in

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Boston. Its first centre in that city was the Church of the Advent; it was transferred in 1882 to the Church of St. John the Evangelist on Bowdoin Street. The spirit and the control of the Society, despite the fact that two original members were American, continued thoroughly British; it was not till 1914 that autonomy was finally secured for the American congregation. Meantime, James Huntington and his friend were American to the core, even though Dod had spent some time at Cowley. Familiar, of course, with the general history of monasticism, they wished to enter that stream of the Religious life which had flowed full and free for over a thousand years, from the time of St. Benedict to the Reformation; a stream turbid and even stagnant at times, yet again and again bringing to Christendom needed refreshment and renewal. But there was a stamp of originality and independence in the ideas of these young men, so definite that the Order of the Holy Cross, the inception of which we are now chronicling, has remained from that day to this an authentic outcome of American life.

The "High Church" movement, as it was then called, was, as we have seen, reviving ancient antagonisms and bearing vivid witness to the intensity of the conflict which had racked Christendom since Reformation times. Like all divisions between honest Christian minds, this conflict was painful and at times acrimonious; but also stimulating and life-giving. If minds ever stop differing, they will be dead. Bishop Huntington was playing a significant part in recalling the Church of his adoption to neglected sources of strength and life. But he remained absolutely within the Protestant tradition, and the time had come when his son's path and his own diverged. During the period of transition, father and son kept as close to each other as they could, and that was very close. In May

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1880, James was advanced to the priesthood. Later in the same year, he wrote to his father: <sup>1</sup>

“Whatever may be said of me as an extreme man, it can not, I think, be said that I am either morbid, effeminate, or dreamy. I have too good an appetite and am too busy for the first, I walk too much for the second, and the atmosphere of police courts and county houses is not favorable to the state of mind described by the third. In the rightness and advantage of two things I strongly believe: religious orders of men and women, and confession. But I do not regard either of these with a sickly sentimentalism or an enthusiasm that cannot see the evils to which they may so easily lead. On the contrary I could paint the bad consequences of both in as dark colors as would satisfy even the Protestant Union, but at the same time I believe that they were both appointed by our Lord Himself for the benefit of the souls of men.” He continues with a touching story about two old men at the County House, whose confessions he had lately heard. Confession was hard for his father to endorse; but as to the need in the Church for Religious Orders, he was in full accord. He writes to a friend in July:

“He [James] feels as I do that we ought to have in this country an order of evangelists corresponding to that of St. John’s (sic) in England, and not English. For years he has felt himself called to some such special and separated work,—a community life.”

With a touch of wistfulness, he wrote on December 19, 1881:

“James, dear boy, has gone on his way, as he believed for

<sup>1</sup> Certain of the following letters are quoted by Dr. James L. Huntington, in his sketch of his uncle contained in the monograph already cited, on the “Sixth Reunion of the Huntington Family.”

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years God called him. With two young priests of about his own age, filled with the same purpose, he has taken an old cheap house, in the lower part of New York, near the East River, in connection with a Mission partly German, started by the Sisters of St. John Baptist.

“There they are, living and working together, in much meditation and prayer, seeking to prepare, if they may, the way of the Lord by being Missioners in the Church at large. They have formed a new Order,—‘The Order of the Holy Cross,’—with Bishop Potter’s approval and with Dr. Houghton as Director. You will imagine the anguish of giving him up here, when I wanted him so much. But how could I hold him back, knowing his heart, seeing what he has done for me and fully believing with him that the Church sorely needs both a standard of holy living in the Ministry and a leaven of Evangelization, supplementing our miserable, halting, half-secular Parochial system? . . . They live in Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, with bare floors, no tablecloths, scanty furniture, plain food, and seem content. I went and celebrated with them one morning, slept there on a cot, and we consecrated the different rooms with prayers from the ‘Priest’s Prayer-Book.’ Pray for them.”

Glimpses can be gained here and there of the young man’s experiments during the preceding years with Catholic practices hitherto unfamiliar. One day his mother discovered that he had discarded the rug in his room, substituting a scrap of carpet. That was not so bad; but putting her hand on the bed she found it perfectly hard, and turned back the sheet to find it covered by a layer of books. “James, what nonsense is this? As for that scrap of carpet, it doesn’t fit your large feet.” So laughing at him, she bade him remove the books, and he complied meekly, doubtless filled with self-conscious chagrin. Rumors survive of his using the Discipline. Such practices are not easy

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to maintain in a modern home. It is said that his father challenged him on the ground of certain ritual gestures he had adopted, being disturbed by the formal and sacerdotal way in which he would walk into the chancel. Again he obeyed without remonstrance; but one realizes that it may have been a relief to him to set up quarters in New York, "with two young priests of his own age."

He was feeling his way; it is a baffling process. An ardent young neophyte is likely to react against both the social and the religious usages that surround him. New England at its best had been a-quiver with defiant social idealism in the previous generation; it would be strange if young James Huntington had not caught a little of the contagion. We hear how, later in his life, he talked eagerly to a younger man about the achievements and limitations of Brook Farm; and there are early intimations of nascent social radicalism. In revolt against class distinctions, he for a time insisted, so we are told, on eating in the kitchen. Presently the cook gave notice: "Mrs. Huntington," said she, "if Master James doesn't know his place, I know mine."

Many a rueful experimenter with democracy has known a like disconcerting experience. But the religious impulse was more in evidence than the social at this time, and it was here that his family, for all their love and sympathy, found it impossible to accompany him on the path which he explored. Bishop Huntington had expressed his full agreement with his son's conviction that we needed in this country "an order of evangelists corresponding to that of St. John's in England, and not English." But if the form his son's actions were now taking was not English, it was to his mind not exactly American. Long time was to pass, if it has come yet, before religious orders of a non-Roman type were to become acclimated in democratic America; and it is no wonder if James' behaviour

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was a little under suspicion to him, as savoring of a romantic return to the dark ages, and an exotic growth in our soil. All the more credit to his unfaltering generosity of spirit. Mrs. Sessions writes concerning the step taken by her brother:

“It meant not only a parting which I knew would be agonizing to his father, but a change to the extreme Anglican position, and a reversion to primitive forms of doctrine and sacramental practice. I knew his intense interest in the Oxford movement and its fruits. Sometimes I had wondered whether it would be the Church of Rome to which he would turn, and whether that was to be the next move in the spiritual history of the family. But I felt sure that his sweetness of spirit would make the disclosure as gentle as possible.” . . . The sisters all knew none the less that to the mind of the Bishop “the revival of the monastic system meant return to outworn mediaeval practices and mystical beliefs.”

## II

In a sense, then, James Huntington’s unprecedented step, like the vows of knighthood, meant “a severance sharp of sweet companionship,” for it involved abrupt breach in continuity, and formal relegation of old affections and connections to a secondary place. Yet in another sense, nothing was forfeited. It is well to stress the natural sanity of Father Huntington’s life. If anyone could demonstrate a monk’s existence as “normal,” it would be he. “As son and brother he fulfilled every duty and claim,” writes Mrs. Sessions. “His brief vacations were times of rejoicing to the Bishop’s children and grandchildren. . . . A little namesake nephew” (incidentally, the Dr. James Huntington from whom we have been quoting) “was terribly frightened on seeing his merry uncle for the

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first time in a long black garment which seemed to change his identity, and screamed with terror. James went to work systematically to dispel this. He took off the cassock and laid it aside, and went into the nursery without it. The child recognized the beloved uncle now, and sprang to him at once. Then he produced his waist cord, and handed it over to the children for a tug-of-war; there was a burst of merriment, then the cassock was brought back, examined, and finally put on again by the owner, all qualms removed."

When now and then he returned to Syracuse, he always visited Calvary Mission, his first charge. "To its people, he was always their parish priest, the man who had known their weaknesses, understood their personalities, brought them Sacramental grace, instructed them in the faith. . . . To the Calvary people for more than forty years, he stood for a guide of both pastor and flock, saw his former parishioners grow up and pass into middle age, and was sometimes granted power to help and influence their children."

We gain interesting descriptions of the nascent community, seen from without and from within. The eager awe-struck curiosity inspired by the new venture is amusingly conveyed in a letter from a young cousin preparing for Harvard:

New York, Dec. 12, 1881

Dear Mother:

I found James at the station waiting for me. He took me to the Brunswick . . . and insisted upon my ordering a regular dinner, even asking me to take wine! I however ordered as simple and inexpensive things as I could. Then we went to the Clergy House. They . . . see about the wretchedest and wickedest side of life in New York. Several times they have had paving stones thrown at them, "not very hard," James said, by roughs, but have had no serious trouble.

They rise at half past five, work and have services till half

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past eight, when they take breakfast. They have a great many services, nine a day, I think. He seems thoroughly happy in his work, and looks, and says he is, very well.

Silence is always kept in the entries, stairways and chapel. On going down in the morning, no one speaks till Father D. says something; then at breakfast all stand while one of the Fathers reads a chapter from the Bible, then bow while grace is said.

The house is very old and quaint, with wooden dadoes and small squares of glass in the windows. The inner wall of my room . . . had settled a foot or more, making quite a hill from one side to another. The first thing I noticed in the room was a kind of shrine or altar at one side. It was made of wood, shaped something like a small bookcase, and had a large crucifix painted on the back.

Indeed, all that evening, as I sat by the fire in the library, filled with musty leather-bound books, old engravings of saints, and a cross over the mantle, the two priests in their long black gowns and the dim light which made the old room look large and hid all modern incongruities, . . . I could hardly realize that I was not in some old monastery.

I think on some days, Fridays for one, they do not speak all day except when necessary. . . . Cousin James wears his long black gown all the time, indoors and out. I noticed that when he spoke of a clergyman he said "priest." . . . I forgot to say that they had almost sixty boys there the night before, playing checkers and other simple games.

Every detail, including the word "priest," viewed with fascinated interest! The young monk tried hard to explain himself to his relatives; leaving out sundry ascetic conditions, such as, for instance, ink freezing so that it had to be melted before use.

Holy Cross Clergy House, Dec. 22, 1882

My dear Aunt:

For some time I have been meaning to send you this little account of the mission in which we are working. Uncle James

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says he will take it to you. He came down in the rain to see us yesterday afternoon. It was very kind of him to take the trouble, and I hope to return his call this afternoon, and perhaps dine at Uncle John's.

I feel that all my relatives are very patient and considerate toward me. I know that my coming here from Syracuse and living as I do must seem strange and unnecessary, and it would be quite natural if my friends should set me down as a wrong-headed fanatic not worth troubling themselves about. But instead of that almost every day brings some kind message from some one or other who has heard of our life and our work, and we have many more encouragements than we could expect, and more than we deserve. Of course my life cuts me off somewhat from those I love; I can not expect to see them so often or to be as much to them in a temporal way; but I trust on the other hand that my affection for them all will only deepen and strengthen, that I may learn to sympathize far more with them in my quiet hours here than if I had given my life up to seeking my own pleasure and advantage, and that when I do meet one and another of them from time to time they may feel that they have really a larger share in me than in the old days of freer intercourse and more open friendship. If it isn't so, it will be as great a disappointment to me as it can be to any other.

I send back Grandfather's Journal. Thank you for it very much.

Your loving nephew,  
James O. S. Huntington, Novice O.H.C.

Then a year later to the same Aunt:

Thank you for your kind loving letter. It was a real comfort to have you write as you do. I should be glad if I could make the point you mention about our life seem more right to you. As to vows, we do not expect to take them yet; of course we look upon the life which we set before us as just as truly a state of life for some, however few, as the married life is for the many. If it is right to bind oneself to the one life after probation of only a few days or weeks, why not to the former, if one believes oneself called to that after a probation of years?

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As to the promise of obedience, I suppose we all feel that a truly noble character is only to be commanded by learning prompt, unquestioning obedience. We certainly admire the virtue in soldiers and heroes, and the world has never forgotten the example of Leonidas and the Three Hundred in the pass of Thermopylae and yet we have in our modern life but little opportunity of practising the virtue of obedience,—I mean of simply doing what one is told because one is told to do it. And yet without obeying how is one to learn to obey? It may be said that no man is perfect, and therefore, in promising to obey, we promise to do many things that are not wise and do not seem so to us, but of course we do not promise to act against conscience or to do anything contrary to any divine commands. But would one really obey unless he sometimes yielded judgment as well as will, and could say "though this does not seem best to me yet I am ignorant, I have often made mistakes before and, therefore, my Superior may be right. At any rate, I will obey him cheerfully for obedience' sake."

Surely Our Lord must have done so when He was subject to Joseph, and His mother, and therefore must have obeyed in many things which to His perfect wisdom were not the wisest or best. I do not think that the danger of the days in which we live is to an excessive obedience. The Rule of an Order is hardly the same as the caprice of an individual, and the Superior of an Order acts not in his private capacity but as the representative of the Rule.

As to food, we breakfast on oatmeal, molasses, milk, bread, butter and sugar, and the same for supper with hominy in place of oatmeal. For dinner we have at this season soup, meat, two kinds of vegetables, and apples, besides bread and crackers. We can have coffee when we wish for it, but do not think it best to drink it as a regular thing. We have good meat, and our food is always well cooked. I can not remember when I made a meal on anything (nothing?) but bread and water—it might be a good thing occasionally, and of course we are grateful to Aunt F. for suggesting it, only do not tell her so. No, really, we do not aim to do queer things but just to make our lives as simple and real as we can. Thank you for the money you

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sent. We live pretty close to the wind, (is that the correct nautical expression?) You need not fear but that your gift was very acceptable.

Thank you above all for your prayer and good wishes. May we all be led to see the Truth more and more clearly, and to fashion our lives in accordance with it.

May a little special anxiety be noted in his expanded dwelling on Obedience? Life was to bring him ample opportunity of practising that distinctive monastic virtue. These letters treat of externals; let us finally quote a beautiful letter to his mother, in which, breaking through all natural reticence, he reveals the inner meaning to him of his life:

Dear Mother: I do not feel satisfied with my letters to you; they tell about outside things, but those which are really the least important in my life. Yet I cannot write of these quiet hours that I spend in my room here, or going to and fro to our frequent offices in chapel, of that sense of the Presence of God which is becoming, I trust, more habitual to me, of those moments when I realize more and more deeply the love of Our dear Lord and my own great unworthiness, of the prayers that I say for you and the others, and the loving thoughts that are going out toward you, all day long. I am less and less distracted by or taken up with affairs of this world, especially in this quiet season (Lent). I have time such as I have never had for *God* and for the dear ones He has given me. Please think of these things if at any time my letters should seem cold or dull.

### III

The first letters just quoted make the external life of the little community vivid, and before long we shall be watching it at work. Can we draw a little nearer to the inward urgency pressing on James Huntington in his healthy and beautiful youth? The monastic ideal! To his nearest and dearest, the re-

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vival of it seemed more than a little fantastic and even perilous. Was there any place for it in modern American life?

Through all the Christian ages, that ideal has summoned its own; from the old hermits who fled to the desert, on to the times of the Irish monks and of St. Benedict, during the decadence of the Roman Empire; on further, to the rise, the flourishing, the decay, of great Orders while Feudalism ran its course. We acclaim the past achievements of monasticism, its great contributions to civilization, to learning, education, agriculture. From the Reformation on, it has been a fading glory, as these great functions passed under secular control. Yet the creative impulse within it, while checked, was never extinguished. Why has it survived?

What was in the mind of a thinker like Kirkegaard, when he said there was no doubt that Christendom "needs the monastery again," for it is "the essential dialectical fact in Christianity"?

The outstanding fact about the monastic ideal is that it intends to allow no compromise.

The Church as a whole, the Church at large, never takes that position. How can she? She belongs to time as well as to eternity. As an institution, in her organic capacity, she is embedded in the existing order of the moment: Roman Imperialism, the Feudal System, modern capitalism, what you will. She cannot extricate herself nor since the Donation of Constantine at least has she ever tried. Nor should she; for in her wide and tender embrace she includes people produced by endless varieties of tradition, conviction and outlook, and at all stages of spiritual progress. She will not and should not exclude them from her fellowship. And if we examine ourselves—you, and you, and I—can any one of us claim in his outward relationships or in his inner life, complete obedience to the high and perfect law of sacrificial love? What social order has ever

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pretended to recognize this law as the shaping principle of its being?

But the Gospels are so terribly uncompromising, whether we turn to the Sermon on the Mount or to the Johannine antithesis between those whom Jesus called "Mine," and those whom He designated as "The World." Yet He prayed, "Not that Thou wouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou wouldest keep them from the evil." Has His prayer ever been fulfilled? Or, if we are to escape the evil, must we leave the world? And if so, in what sense? That here is a question urgently present in concrete form not only to the extreme Pacifist but to many other contemporary Christian minds, needs no demonstration.

Christians do quite often try to be honest. From very early times, there have always been individuals, there have also been minority groups, trying to sustain an absolutist position. Sometimes they have despaired of the historic and institutional Church; thus have started the chief heresies and schisms. (Father Huntington, who wanted men to "live dangerously," is reported to have said once that each of the saints was within a hair's breadth of being a heretic.) Sometimes they have remained loyally within the Mystical Body, and when they have so done they have been the salt of the earth and the salvation of the Church. Among these minority groups, the most fruitful and significant have perhaps been the monastic orders. No compromise! Complete separation from "the evil" of "the world," surrender without reserve to the ideals, the precepts, of Jesus. The Counsels of Perfection! This attitude required, as was felt from the earliest times, entire disentanglement from other ties; from possessions; from family claims; from subjection to any authority not ordained of God. Poverty, Chastity, Obedience. All can be misconstrued. Either poverty or chastity can lead to a false asceticism and denial of the sacra-

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mental glory of natural good; while obedience is the slogan of the Totalitarian State. Yet, consecrated, they are the law, not of the negation of life but of its fulfilment. So they were conceived and practised by James Huntington. "The Religious Life does not mean the contradiction of the experiences of those who are in the world, but rather their sublimation." So he was to write, in May 1927, when sending with a letter of consolation the poem "On the Death of a Greek Monk" which we have placed following our title page.

If at the Reformation the monastic impulse was checked and the movement driven into obscurity, it was partly because the monastic orders, being human, had too often become corrupt; partly because they were condemned by the general revolt against the Roman system. Perhaps there was also a deeper reason. Perhaps the ground-swell of democracy, already silently at work in the social depths, shrank from implications seemingly present in the Counsels, of a spiritual aristocracy and a double code for Christians. How pathetically hard men had tried, in Calvin's Geneva, or in our own New England for instance, to impose a code of absolute virtue on a whole community! How, for that matter, people have struggled all down the centuries, to do that very thing! They have never succeeded. Not for more than a minute.

But the vocation literally and completely to follow Christ is tenacious, persistent, deathless. In the period of the Counter Reformation, to give one among many examples from the Roman communion, appeared the Jesuits. And in the little Anglican communion—small in proportionate numbers yet unique in significance—the revival of Religious Orders had, as we know, been going on for many years. Sisterhoods, and the S.S.J.E. had done fine missionary work in the United States, whither they came, one may suspect, with the ardor with which they might have come to any other region of out-

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standing heathendom. There had been a slight abortive attempt at forming an American Order, under Bishop Ives, at Valle Crucis, in North Carolina. It had come to nothing. Now came a fresh start in which James Huntington was the pioneer. His interpretations of the monastic ideal were those of a modern American responsive to all vibrations of contemporary life. "Wherever there are not religious orders, the life of the Church degenerates," said he.

The monastic ideal can be translated into many forms without losing its essence. At first it had been individualist and separatist, driving its votaries into isolation and the desert, and the tradition still survives, in the remote monasteries of Egypt. But soon hermits became cenobites, cenobites gathered into organized social groups, and such groups crystallized in due time into those mighty communities so great a factor in mediæval life. It is easy to see what type attracted James Huntington. He certainly did not want to be a hermit; he wished rather to live at the heart of things, where humanity was densest and human need acutest. At the same time, it is doubtful if the primary image in his mind was that of a community. The community idea, implicit in his vocation, was in time to claim its own; but it does not seem to have distressed him unduly when during the years of his novitiate his two companions fell away. For fall away they did. Father Dod, with very bad asthma, was forced to leave New York and retired for reasons of health to a sheep ranch in Texas; Father Cameron discovered discrepancies between his conceptions in regard to vows and those of his colleagues; he resumed the life of a secular parish priest. Undaunted, and seemingly unshaken in desire, the young monk Father Huntington pursued his solitary way.

Years later, in a Retreat given to the members of his Order, he presented in simple and beautiful words his abiding concept of that vexed question: the reason for the separate state of the

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Religious. He meditates on the text from St. John just quoted:

“We must try to see what is, and is not, the difference between the secular and the Religious. It might be thought to lie in the fact that one is the world and the other is not. But this is a mistake to begin with. . . . The Religious is in the world as well as the secular. Nor is it true to say that the Religious and the secular have different moral codes.

“We are not to think of ourselves as a spiritual aristocracy, but as a special corps, charged with a peculiar and important responsibility to carry to others what we have received on their behalf. . . . Religious are spoken of as having ‘left the world.’ They have done so, in the sense that they are separated from the ordinary interests and employments in which most men engage, and must engage if the world is to go on. Moreover, they have, in a more manifest and formal way than other Christians, abjured the ideals, the standards, the maxims, of those to whom the world is all. But the relation of the Religious to the world is not merely negative. We are not simply to cut loose from the world, leaving it and those who are in it to their fate. We are taken apart because we are called into a special relation with God. But, once established in that relation, we are to find that He is tremendously concerned about the world, and that He would have us share in His effort to save it. . . . What then should be our conduct in regard to the world? We must *Know About* it. We must not shut our eyes or leave it out of our thoughts, or refuse to inform ourselves in regard to it. God is working there. Can it be right for us to turn away in indifference from what He is doing? Must we not rather be eager to recognize His action and to know by His Spirit how we are to coöperate with Him? Knowledge of the world, knowledge of God’s work in the world, knowledge of what He wants us to do in the world—these are the lines on which our *Minds* must work. . . . All this involves

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effort, time and courage. We must be at pains about it. It must be the business of our lives. It must unify our lives."

Some Religious would say that to carry out this ideal would involve a state of unstable equilibrium, and a combination of incompatibles. Let the monk occupy himself only with preaching Jesus, leaving on one side, not only partisanship but even active concern with secular affairs. Such was not the natural attitude of Father Huntington. Many problems of adjustment and of reconciliation were to await him; and from such earnest reflections as those just quoted, it can clearly be seen that tension, springing from differences as to ideals, scope, and function, is as likely to obtain within as without a Religious Community.



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## CHAPTER V

### THE HOUR OF DECISION

#### I

ON November 25, 1884, James Otis Sargent Huntington took his final vows as Father of the Order of the Holy Cross. Sundry accounts of the event appeared in the press.

From the *New York Sun*, Dec. 27, 1884:

In the chapel of the Mission of the Holy Cross of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in Sixteenth St., opposite Stuyvesant Square, at a recent private celebration of the Holy Communion in which the Bishop of Tennessee, Bishop Huntington of Central New York, the Rev. Dr. Morgan Dix of Trinity Church, the Rev. Arthur Ritchie of St. Ignatius, and the Rev. John Shackelford of the Church of the Redeemer took part, the Rev. James O. S. Huntington, son of Bishop Huntington, took on himself the vows of the Order of the Holy Cross. . . . Assistant Bishop Henry C. Potter received the profession.

Description of the Office follows but is given in more detail in *The Church* for January 10, 1885:

The office provides that the profession shall take place during a celebration of the Holy Communion. After the Gospel has been sung, the novice to be professed shall be led forward by the Superior and shall stand before the Altar. He shall hand to the Bishop the copy of the Rule of Life of the Order of the Holy Cross, written by himself. The Bishop shall place this upon the altar with the cross and girdle, and turning to the novice shall demand:

“Do you solemnly and forever surrender all that you possess, or of which you may hereafter become possessed, even to the

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least article of personal use or enjoyment, in accordance with the vow of religious poverty?"

"I do."

"Will you diligently serve God for the remainder of your life in the virgin state, striving to follow the example of the perfect purity of our virgin Lord in all your thoughts, words and deeds as the vow of religious chastity demands?"

"I will, the Lord being my helper."

"Will you shape your life in accordance with the Rule of Life of the Order of the Holy Cross? And will you give respectful obedience to all lawful commands of your superior and to the decisions of the chapter, submitting your own will to their godly directions and administrations under the vow of religious obedience?"

"I will, by the help of God."

The questions having been put and answered, the Bishop said: "Almighty God, who hath given you the will to do all these things, grant you also strength and power to fulfil the same; that He may accomplish the work which He hath begun in you, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

*Veni Creator Spiritus* was then sung, and the Bishop, taking the right hand of the novice still kneeling, said, "I admit you, . . . a member of the Order of the Holy Cross, in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Then, taking from the Superior the cross and giving it to the novice:

"Receive this Cross, the symbol of Christ's love, and may it be your only earthly possession, that you may the more readily follow Him Who had not where to lay His head."

Giving him the cord:

"Receive this cord, the symbol of the bond of Christ's love, which unites you to your virgin Lord. Gird with it your loins, that the virtue of chastity may be evermore with you, and you may be the more ready to care for the things of the Lord, how you may please Him."

Giving him the Rule of Life:

"Receive this Rule, which you have promised to obey, and

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may it be a guide to you in learning that true subjection of your will to the Will of God which is an acceptable sacrifice to Him."

This Office as used must have been a little modified; for there was no Superior, at this time, nor was there till much later a written Rule. But it was doubtless the form which Father Huntington had prepared. His father was the Gospeller; Dr. Houghton, beloved friend and eager supporter, was the preacher. The Rev. M. Lloyd Woolsey who was present at the profession remembers a touching moment. "Father Huntington and Bishop Potter knelt side by side to receive the Blessed Sacrament. The Bishop had then to leave immediately; but before doing so he put his arm around Father Huntington's neck, and turned and kissed him. Was not this indeed a 'kiss of peace'?"

Another friend present says that she asked him after the profession if he would say unqualifiedly that that was the "highest life." He replied: "I can only say it is the only life for me." The *Sun* gives a description of the habit: "The dress of the members of the Order consists of a black beretta and a long dark monkish-looking gown confined at the waist by a black cord passed three times around the body. From a black string around the neck depends a black crucifix.<sup>1</sup> It is said that the crucifix worn by the Rev. Mr. Huntington was blessed on the altar when he joined the Order. He passed through a novitiate of two years."

## II

From the year 1884 to 1891, Father Huntington kept a scrap-book. It is a massive folio, filled with clippings from newspapers secular and religious, personal letters alphabetically

<sup>1</sup> It was really a cross.—Author's note.

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filed and so carefully gummed together at the back that access to them is difficult, packages of post cards—how queer the format of those old post cards looks!—programs, leaflets of various sorts, miscellaneous and unclassified material. The book is a treasure trove for any one studying currents of thought, feeling and action, in the spheres of religion and social reform, during the period. It offers a wilderness in which to wander.

This precious volume was reported lost; but it turned up, more or less casually, in a closet at the West Park monastery, and was triumphantly produced. The circumstance recalls the fate of documents concerning that other saintly man, Bishop Schereschewsky, buried for decades in the cellars of 281 Fourth Avenue, New York, and recovered as by miracle when his biography was under way. Would that the ecclesiastical world had a little more respect for its annals!

About a third of the contents of the book relates to Father Huntington's Profession. He must have kept every scrap. The collection not only reveals the temper of the times with its sharp contrasts, but throws fascinating light on the personality of the young aspirant. We see him ardent and imaginative, buoyed up by that intense assurance of vocation which when vouchsafed is one of life's supreme blessings; we feel the daring, the hushed ecstatic humility, the passion for the glorious traditions of the religious past. And we certainly feel a strong sense of humour. Why else should he have preserved every criticism, every bit of vituperation—the word is not too strong—every expression of pained surprise, or even of righteous horror, evoked by the step he has taken? This copious collection is a revelation of the contemporary state of mind in Protestant Christianity. If we are to understand the atmosphere in which James Huntington was for years to carry on

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his life and to see the background of his activities, we should explore it.

The volume opens with a long article from *The Church* of December 20, 1884, couched in a tone of grieved amazement and lofty disapproval:

“An incident is reported from the Diocese of New York that has filled the hearts of many Churchmen with anxiety and sorrow. The Assistant Bishop of the Diocese, at a service in the open Church, when and where the Holy Communion was celebrated, made himself the instrument for the imposition upon a young clergyman of the so-called vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The young clergyman, (the Rev. James O. S. Huntington) has become a member of the Order of the Holy Cross, and devotes himself to mission work among the neglected classes of the city of New York. Bishop Huntington, the father of the ‘novice,’ was present, and so also were a number of the clergy. . . .

“In God’s name, let men do their utmost and their best in order that the poor may be helped and the sinful saved. But let them not think that these ends can be attained only under the form of organizations or orders which have vexed the historic Church with strife, or through vows *One* of which at least involves a reflection upon the sacred mystery of marriage.” Etc., etc. After indulging in a paean on this sacrament, the article contrives to find in the vow of Chastity, an indirect insult to the womanhood of our mothers!

Despite such absurdity, some good points are made: “Of the vow of poverty, the least to be said is that there is a sad unreality about it, unless there is a determination to renounce all property not just in respect to one’s own person, but also in respect to one’s own order. On the imposition of the vow of ‘obedience’ by a Bishop in the Church of God, who practically

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displaces himself in favor of the superior or chapter of the Order of the Holy Cross, we can only express amazement and apprehension." The first matter here suggested, the relation of corporate to individual poverty, has proved a stumbling block in the way of many a religious group besides the Franciscans. We learn that each member of the nascent Order of the Holy Cross was supposed to abandon all property in excess of \$300.00 a year. The sum went further in 1884 than it would today, but it would hardly spell security, to say nothing of affluence, and nothing was said about endowments. Neither was suggestion made as to how the candidate should dispose of his means; whether to his family, to his Order, or to designated charities. Probably the young fathers had not thought the matter through. Today, they own nothing as individuals; on profession they give their money either to their relatives, or, in consultation with the Superior, to chosen charities. . . . As to the other question, concerning a possible clash of authorities, it suggests thin ice on which Religious Orders often have to move with caution.

Around these and other questions, hot and long-continued controversy broke out. The article fairly represents the reaction of a large section in Church opinion toward the step that had been taken. Such ritual as was observed at the Profession, concerning the details of which the young aspirant had been very scrupulous, is annoying to a number of people: "When did the Lord, when on earth, ever ask any man to get down on his knees to Him eight or ten times in as many minutes?" Through the whole discussion appears sharp cleavage between "High Church"—the term "Anglo-Catholicism" had not yet been coined—and the Low Church, Protestant tradition. A persistent dread of "monasticism," a conviction of its bad record in history, is harped on. "Has the verdict gone backward, been set aside, and is the revival of monachism an ac-

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knowledged necessity of the day?" Writers are alarmed; the "Roman terror" rests heavy on them, and the feeling is much the same as that later focused in the A. P. A. or the Know Nothing movement. "The laity hold that the English Reformation was a great and glorious reality, and they mean that so far as in them lies, the Church in the United States shall neither ignore nor belittle it by going back to the errors and abuses of pre-Reformation days." "Nothing for years has so startled me," writes "A Churchman"; and another correspondent remarks airily that: "there is too much light in this country for religious cave-life." The young Father must have chuckled as he pasted that comment carefully in. If some writers are shocked, others are lenient, and a number reflect pure bewilderment. Others, largely from the secular press, try to preserve a balance. Approval is not limited to men of one party; the Protestants are by no means always hostile, and not only Morgan Dix and De Costa but men like Heber Newton and Dr. Rainsford of St. George's rally to the defense of the young monk. And, "There are also monasteries in Thibet," remarks the *New York Times*. As for the Roman Catholics, so far as they pay attention to the matter at all, it is only to sneer at the "fantastic Anglicans." They are so scornful that they sound cross. Monsignor Capel, on January 24, 1885, writes with decision and the true Roman note of finality, "the monastic system is wholly alien to Protestantism"; a position to which many of Father Huntington's Protestant critics would heartily accede.

It is noteworthy that the defense rests almost entirely on practical values; on approval of the idea that it is well that devoted men free from ties should be found to work among "the poor." (That such might be equally useful for work among the rich is not suggested; "the poor" are often spoken of with bated breath, as a newly discovered menace and a dis-

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grace to American civilization.) Comments in the scrap-book bring out forcibly the distance from which the civilized New Yorker regarded the slums of his city. One is really startled to find in a city of the Eighties an attitude which might seem to antedate Hannah More. "It is often hard to realize," says one newspaper, "that those wretched souls which lie in the slums of New York City or of any large city, are souls at all. But surely they are." The supposed heroic courage of the young priest in living on the East Side was the chief factor in reconciling people to his queer behaviour. Had he been proposing to explore the African jungle, they could hardly have been more excited than by his establishing headquarters in East Thirteenth Street or on Avenue C.

Says *The Evening Gazette* of Boston: "That young Mr. Huntington chooses to wear a gown of sackcloth and to tie a rope around his waist seems to me a matter that concerns only himself. . . . They (the brothers) live in a tenement house district on the East Side, and do the missionary work which they find to do at their own doors. It seems to me that it is much better for unmarried men to do this dangerous work than for the married." In similar vein, Father Betts makes the canny remark that perpetual vows are a protection for a man against all the young ladies who might otherwise "regard him as their lawful prey." Sisterhoods are, it is acknowledged, doing a lot of good in "furnishing occupation to women piously disposed, who were wasting away their time in idleness." If Sisterhoods, why not Brotherhoods? So good solid American common sense comes to the rescue. Of deeper possible defense of the "Religious" life, on the call to restore balance in fevered America by enhanced emphasis on the interior disciplines, on the practise of contemplation and prayer, no hint is to be found. Rather, as one of the most vehement defenders of the

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infant Order eagerly points out, the members are to devote themselves to works of mercy, and there is no danger lest they spend their time "sitting up with their own sick souls."

### III

Father Huntington was far from being the only object of attack in this lively episode. Quite as sharp a fire was directed against Bishop Potter, who was even more than the younger man the centre of the storm. Characteristic the remark of *The Southern Churchman* on January 8, 1885: "As publicity spoiled the vows of Mr. Huntington, so being party to this publicity as Bishop Potter has become, he has not only done that which he has no authority to do, and against all the customs and traditions of this Church, but he has aided a well-meaning Christian man to wipe the Christian bloom from his young manhood, to do what he has done, not only from the love of Christ, but in part from the praise of men. . . . We wonder with great wonder how a man like Bishop Potter could have made himself a party to this." The *Tribune*, entering the fray, hit the nail on the head in the opinion of many people by challenging his action and interviewing various and sundry clergymen on the matter.

In the ensuing discussion, Bishop Potter, who says frankly that he was in far from complete sympathy with the action of Father Huntington, either as to taste or to judgment, shows himself a man of statesmanlike courage, impartiality, and suavest Christian courtesy. These qualities shine out in his reply to the strictures of his ecclesiastical Head, Bishop Lee of Delaware. The discussion—let us not call it controversy—between these two able and devout Churchmen would be well worth quoting in full did space permit, for it deals with issues, com-

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petently presented on both sides, which are constant in the Church of Christ. Bishop Potter—described by one commentator as “a singularly conservative man; cool, clearheaded”—defends his freedom of action with spirit. His opponent, an evangelical Low Churchman, had written, illustrating from the history of the Cistercians, the Franciscans, and others: “I conceive the evidence of history to be conclusive, that the principle on which monasticism is based is inherently vicious.” The good Bishop, whose strong point was evidently not an historic imagination, must have been “startled” when Bishop Potter gently retorted that, corrupt as religious orders have sometimes been, he is himself unable to regard the Reformation as a finality. (One of the comments had drily and pertinently remarked that there was small danger lest the glorious work of the Reformation be undone by an excessive prevalence in our day of chastity and poverty!) He points out the tremendous need for just such work as Father Huntington is doing: “Do you know, my dear and revered Presiding Bishop, what a New York tenement is?” Bishop Lee probably didn’t.

It must be confessed that Bishop Potter evades a little when it comes to a much-mooted question; that concerning the revocable or irrevocable character of Father Huntington’s vows. An extraordinary heat is generated in this discussion; “disgusting,” “detestable” are adjectives used. Now the Bishop would really have preferred to think that the vows were revocable; but the Office he had used gave no color to this position. He refused to commit himself, but submitted with high-bred humility to Episcopal authority, which in time replied at length but took no further action in the matter. It may be noted that his defense, like all others, ignored the possible spiritual grounds for such action as Father Huntington’s, in relation to eternity and the drama of the soul; nor does he discuss the inherent viciousness or inherent virtues of monasticism. What

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commanded his sympathy is the social impulse and the practical value of the monastic life. He was to be disappointed by-and by.

A private letter found in the scrap-book, bearing date of New Orleans, Jan. 7, 1885, may well be quoted in this connection. Is it by inadvertance or deliberation that Bishop Potter avoids "Father" and begins: "Dear Mr. Huntington"?

Your note of the second has just reached me here. Thank you for it, and for the article from *The Boston Transcript* which you enclose. It puts the thing in a very wholesome and direct way.

As to the journalistic and other criticisms of my part in your profession, you must not give yourself a moment's concern. I am glad to have the whole matter thoroughly "talked out," and, incidentally, to feel that I am no longer in danger of the anathema pronounced against those whom the world speaks well of. May God bless you in your work, and in your inmost life, prays

yours ever affectionately,

H. C. Potter.

How Father Huntington must have enjoyed preserving all those clippings from the press! They make spicy and illuminating reading. But apart from the picture presented of the states of mind in American Protestantism in the Eighteen Eighties, one sees them raising questions which are with us still, and will be as long as organized Christianity endures.

It is a relief to find in the interspersed bundles of letters so carefully preserved in the scrap-book, variety in tone and frequent sympathy. They are written in response to an invitation to attend the Profession, or to remember the neophyte and his infant Order at the altar. Some are purely formal, and it is touching evidence of the importance of the occasion to the young monk that he has preserved even the most perfunctory

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post card. Many of the notes, however, express enthusiasm, fellowship, and thanksgiving; if tabulated they would almost offer a roll call of the Catholic-minded clergy of the day. First comes a little group from Heads and members of Religious Houses in England—Wantage, Cowley St. John, the House of Mercy, Clewer. The most interesting of these is from Father Benson, Founder of the Society of St. John the Evangelist, and veteran leader in the revival of the Religious Life:

This day has scarcely yet dawned upon you—but I suppose that ere many hours you will have taken your vows. May God accept them in the opulence of His Love to the glory of His only begotten Son. I have just been celebrating with a special intention for you. . . . I am here conducting a Retreat for this community.

The growth of this and of the other Sisterhoods is a great encouragement to us to look forward to a similar development amongst men in the next quarter of a century, but we must not be in a hurry for growth. Enough if we ourselves can live true to our vows. Perhaps some of the founders of religious orders would rather that their posterity had not been so numerous. The numbers who join do not add to, perhaps sometimes take away from, the sanctity of the few. We must rejoice that our own names are written in Heaven, and watch that they may not be blotted out. He that endureth to the end shall be saved, glorifying God, but perseverance is an individual gift, and “all alone, so Heaven hath willed, we die.”

If we can secure an eternity in Heaven by the Blood of Jesus, we may leave it with God to give, or not to give, perpetuity on earth to those things which we have initiated. “All that is not Heaven must fade,” but “he that doeth the Will of God abideth forever.”

I am v. affectionately in Christ,

Richard Meux Benson

Through quaint phraseology shines here the exalted mysticism of Father Benson; many a time in coming years Father

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Huntington may have recalled his wise warning against impatience. Another letter in this group says: "I am most sincerely grateful that God has opened the way for your consecration, and in a way that connects you so closely with our community. I have always hoped that a really American plant would grow on the new soil." Father A. C. A. Hall, later Bishop Hall of Vermont, writes from Cowley St. John: "May Our Lord to Whom you wholly dedicate yourself keep you ever true to His love, that you may know more and more of its secrets and may He enable you faithfully to rear the standard of His Holy Cross in the midst of the world city."

The next set of letters is from Bishops. Many of them write succinctly on post cards, and are not very sympathetic. But Bishop Seymour writes from Springfield, Illinois: "I thank my God for your good example. I live to look up and see my fellow beings lifted by grace so high. May the Holy Spirit never leave you, but keep you in all your ways, and make you and your brethren the salt to season our Church and make her more and more worthy of such precious gifts. Give my love to dear Dod."

Now come several groups from the clergy at large, carefully alphabetized. Sometimes, to speak frankly, they administer a snub. For instance, Rev. Samuel Buell at the General Seminary writes curtly, and refuses the request "for help of intention at the Altar" on the ground of "my utter ignorance of the Order of the Holy Cross or of the reason for its existence as a separate factor in our Church." Carter, Coit, Coolidge, Cook, De Costa, on they run, names evoking many associations in those who care for the story of the Anglican Church in the United States. Presently comes a sad little letter from Father Huntington's first comrade, R. S. Dod. The handwriting is shaky; for "I have sprained or broken my wrist building a sheep pen." "Dear Father: Thank God for the news your

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letter brings. I rejoice more than anyone else at the fulfilment of the design God put into our hearts nearly four years ago, and for myself His Will be done."

Pleasant greeting comes from Nashotah: "An American society born and nurtured among our own people and free from all entanglements is a boon to the Church beyond price." But dispassionate and critical appraisements are not lacking. An amusing example is a letter from the Rev. George H. Huntington, who writes with cheerful brotherly candor:

"I as you know have not had any doubts as to its being thoroughly Catholic to take vows of celibacy, chastity and obedience under the usual limitations. . . . How these people who are so much disturbed now can interpret the texts in the Gospels which indicate these states of life (celibacy, etc.) I can not understand. . . . Some lesser points in your rule or mode of life I have thought with a great deal of anxiety about." He speaks of confession, as urged, or extensively used, in the ordinary parish; and then he is agitated concerning the long cassock. This matter was agitating a good many people. The newspapers had loved to talk about it, and a clever caricature had appeared in one of them. Father Huntington had been described by the *New York Morning Journal*, for instance: "A tall, slender, intellectual-looking man, wearing a black beretta and black cassock fitting closely to the figures and reaching to within a foot of the ground. A heavy black cord wound three times around the waist and tied at the left side served as a belt. A black wooden cross was hung around his neck." The unfamiliar and romantic garb was exciting a good many people, and the young monk's own anxious interest in every detail appears in sundry letters he has kept, from seeming experts, concerning such vital points as whether the cross should be worn to the right side or to the left. To the end of his

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life, his Habit had deep symbolic values to him. But his brother is a little impatient concerning such grave matters: "You have to draw the line somewhere, on practical grounds and a respect or regard for custom in dress. A religious 'habit' should express mortification and conceal the figure. But if guided by this principle alone you might go to any painful or grotesque extent,—wearing a cowl, etc. You ought to consider the requirements of custom in masculine apparel, which forbids the concealment of the feet and ankles. And to give a visible assurance of neat shoes and pantaloons is in itself desirable. . . . It certainly ought to be borne in mind that painful or grotesque exaggeration in dress or anything else may be a dangerous snare or stumbling block to those who have a vocation to the 'religious' life. I do not know of anything else I should alter except allusions in your Breviary to baseless and superstitious legends and expressions verging on Mariolatry. . . . I feel more and more that the existence of a thoroughly consistent and unobtrusive 'religious' order in the Church may be a great and blessed channel of spiritual life and truth and I pray that the hope may support you in your trials and difficulties. I presume there are many incidents to such a life which outsiders do not know of. The good that might be done will surely be neutralized by any suspicion of partizan scheming or Romish compromise or ritualistic self-indulgence."

This tempered blessing, with its earnest stress on the religious values of pantaloons, probably represents pretty well the attitude of James Huntington's sensible and devout family toward his strange adventure. But the next letter in his collection is one over which he must have thought a long time. It is from his distinguished kinsman, Dr. W. R. Huntington, who, in the preceding year, had succeeded Bishop Potter as rector of Grace Church, New York; and it registered sharp disapproval:

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My dear James: . . . My feelings always have been and always will be most friendly toward you, notwithstanding the fact that I am filled with sorrowful dismay at the transaction in which you have lately taken part. It is a difficult, but by no means an impossible thing to keep one's personal friendships unhurt by differences of opinion and belief, and if you find me in the future opposing with all my might the introduction into our Church of the ascetic theology and the practises and terminology associated with it, I hope you will remember that I have written this, and will believe that I am as truly actuated by principle in my hostility to, as you in your advocacy of, the revival of monasticism.

Like the controversy between Bishops Lee and Potter; this fine letter witnesses to the life-giving and profound divergences which can be purified from all taint of bitterness, obstinacy or hate within the rich unity of discipleship to the One Lord. But it would be a pity to close this selection from the varied reactions on James Huntington's daring step, with the note of dissent. Our last quotation shall be from a long letter by Rev. F. M. Hubbard, who writes from Raleigh, North Carolina. He was evidently a very old and very gentle man. His letter, written in pencil, in a clear but somewhat tremulous hand, suggests an older generation, especially in its use of the long S's, characteristic of the eighteenth rather than of the nineteenth century, and a curious survival here. Reading, we seem to look back through a long vista, to the very first stirrings of a Catholic instinct in the Protestant Episcopal Church. It is written on successive dates: "A common letter," says he, "often costs me two days."

Now that you have reached what, it seems to me, must be a critical point in your course, may I not ask you to let me know—if I may know—the character plan and purpose of the Order into which you are soon to be fully initiated. I do not ask for secrets, if such there be, but so much only that I may be enabled

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to conceive, to form some definite notion, in what and where and how you are to live and act and be, in the relations you are about to assume. . . .

I have no doubt your Order is in every way proper and loyal, and like to be very useful. But I have wished to learn somewhat about it, not solely from my great interest in you. There is in it the token of a new temper in the Church, the promise of great service; if only the movement be well guided. I have all confidence in your discretion. Still, I can only wonder at the immense change that has come upon the spirit of our Church in the last forty years. When I entered its ministry, forty-three years ago, the very name of your Order would have been enough to call down imprecations upon it. Every Bishop—as I think—would have denounced it; more than nineteen-twentieths of the clergy would have refused their countenance; and there would have been a howl of the laity all through the land. The Carey ordination were nothing to it, or Bishop McIlwaine's war upon altars without legs. What a change! And how full of hope!

Pardon me if I have asked amiss. Pray for me, that in my old age my strength may not fail me. That the presence and blessing of our gracious Lord and Master may ever be with you is the earnest desire and shall be the prayer of one who has loved you long and well, and who has good hope of good service from you for Christ and His Church.

Pantaloons versus altars without legs! Terrible the issues that divide the people of God!

The waters of the river of life in their onward flow through history can be very stormy at times. They were so in the Protestant Episcopal Church of the last century. In these reactions to the decision of James Huntington, we can watch the cross-currents swirl and toss in pretty wild disorder. But clear, pure and steady, beneath all surface tumult, we may believe that the stream flowed on, making glad the City of God.



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## CHAPTER VI

### EARLY ACTIVITIES

#### I

“**W**HETHER communities are divinely sanctioned, I have doubted,” had written the Rev. George Huntington to his brother. But for some time, there was no question of a community. Other aspirants had fallen by the way, and for several years, until the Profession of Father Sturges Allen in 1888, Father Huntington was the only member of the Order of the Holy Cross. It is on record that at public meetings the question was sometimes asked as to the numbers in the Order; and that on such occasions he would rise and make a little bow. He was working, as Father Dod had done, in connection with the Mission of the Holy Cross under the Sisters of St. John Baptist, to whom he pays a loving tribute in the *Holy Cross Magazine* for November 1934; and he says that the name of the Mission probably suggested that of the Order. Its work, among the German immigrants of the East Side, was first on the corner of Avenue B and Seventh Street, later on Avenue C, near the present Christodora House. Here lived Father Huntington, in a neighborhood where was to be found, as one newspaper comment had it, “everything that was undesirable.” The life to which the young monk had committed himself was one of strange contrasts. Without, the confused and ceaseless racket of lower New York, devastating then as now even if automobiles had not yet come. Within, the ordered rhythm of praise and prayer, in which a sixth-century follower of St.

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Benedict would have been at home; a rhythm broken by long silences.

Father Huntington would have resented newspaper aspersions on his chosen residence. But we can well imagine that living in lower New York would not have been without cost to the country-loving boy he had been, and the devotee of the country he always was. He was fond of quoting,—of course with no avowed reference to himself,—certain verses of George Macdonald:

“I said ‘Let me walk in the fields:’

    He said ‘Nay walk in the town’

I said ‘There are no flowers there’;

    He said ‘No flowers, but a crown’.

“I said ‘The sky is bleak,

    There is nothing but noise and a din’;

But He wept as He sent me back—

‘There is more’ He said ‘there is Sin’.

“I said ‘But the air is thick

    And fogs are veiling the Sun’;

He answered ‘Yet souls are sick,

    And souls in the dark are undone’.

“I said ‘I shall miss the light,

    And friends shall miss me, they say’;

He answered me ‘Choose tonight

    If I am to miss you, or they’.

“I pleaded for time to be given;

    He said ‘Is’t hard to decide?

It will not seem hard in Heaven

    To have followed the steps of your guide’—

“I cast one look at the fields,

    Then set my face to the town:

He said ‘My child do you yield?

    Will you leave the flowers for the crown?’

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“Then into His hand went mine,  
And into my heart came He,  
And I walk in a light divine  
The path I had feared to see.”

He was a real pioneer; his action antedated by several years the foundation of settlements in America; and the public attitude of amazement would be ludicrous were it not so pitiful an illustration of the chasm then separating the “classes” from the “masses.” Even more bewildering, morbid, pointless, and queerer than his choice of abode, appeared the religious aspects of the young monk’s life to the average American citizen. Yet as this gentleman proceeded on his lively gregarious way, dominated then as now by external pursuits, he might feel a little wistful; for we really live in Eternity, and to pause at regular intervals, that we may be aware in inhabiting the Timeless, is a great help as we stumble along breathlessly through Time.

As for James Huntington, he was certainly not occupied with “nursing his own sick soul.” He was one of the most wholesome of natures; were one to classify him he might be placed among the extroverts rather than the introverts; and he actually seems to have solved as well as it can be solved the perplexing problem of the “mixed life.” His keen sympathies caused him so to throw himself into the lives of others that he recalls Keats’ definition of the poet, as one “always in and filling some other body.” “Identify yourself with your people; you must never identify them with yourself” was to be his warning to a younger priest. His service of his fellow men was unsurpassed in flexible power of adaptation, in gaiety, in loving insight and in shrewd practical wisdom. Living in a sordid environment, life for him never lacked beauty or romance; for abiding romance is in human contacts, and the abiding joy is fellowship.

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To find romance or beauty in the contacts offered by lower New York—or anywhere else for that matter—is, it must be confessed, not always easy. Loving is a gift, of which there is only one certain guarantee; the assurance that every street hoodlum, every Tammany boss, every loud-voiced vulgar boy or girl, is a child of God and made in His Image. This assurance was Father Huntington's. Love to God was the fire burning at the centre of his being. We recall his father's gentle remark to a critic: "We must remember that James loves God more than we do." In the warmth and light of this fire, fanned by those long hours of meditation and prayer which had become his instinctive and permanent habit, he could look as God Himself looks, at men. He loved people; we shall watch him as time passed, led from personal contacts into sundry enterprises, philanthropic or religious, and thence on into more exciting regions where he allied himself with the sweep of movements or causes challenging the very foundations of the social structure; he shared the early phases of the release into our democracy of deep, disquieting forces, revolutionary or reconstructive as one may decide. But none of these ever obscured his primary concern. That was with individuals. The point is worth dwelling on. For today, high-minded men and women, born to privilege, restless under the impact of knowledge harder and harder to escape, of the vicious anomalies and cruel injustices of modern life, take refuge in ideas. They beat against the imprisoning walls of their class psychology, forcing an exit; but too often by the dangerous route of one or another ideology. This was not Father Huntington's way. He was a practical man before he was a theorist, and always his close and humorous sympathy with separate lives put solid ground beneath his feet.

At the same time, these very sympathies soon led him beyond surface facts to explore causes of moral failure deep-

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rooted in conditions or environment. Christian thought nowadays is busy refuting Marx by presenting its diametrically opposed view of the nature of man; and it does well. Now Father Huntington had read Marx; but it was plain experience which led him to share with the Marxists a perception that the seeds of character are planted in economic soil and that growth is largely affected by its quality. Indeed, the definiteness with which he perceived and maintained the fact, often, as we shall be called to note, against opposition, reduces to absurdity the usual communist contention that the idea was original with their master. More and more, Christians recognize that a sacramental conception of reality involves acceptance of much truth in economic determinism. It is in fundamental thought concerning human origins that there comes an impassable dividing line. The advanced Marxist has outgrown crass forms of materialism; he posits "God," or at least spiritual reality, as the end toward which the universe strives. But he never sees it at the beginning; his "God" is Omega but not Alpha. Father Huntington, on the other hand, saw in every street urchin, in every worn factory girl, the primal Divine Image. There was no waste in his universe, for in each and every human being he discerned a latent capacity to grow into the Likeness of Christ.

## II

The scrap-book, in its rich and varied detail, affords a delightful survey of his activities and of the zest with which he pursued them. This survey sounds commonplace now, but it was not commonplace then. The Social Services were in their infancy. Today, their enterprises are stereotyped; salaried social workers number hundreds and thousands. They meet in Conferences, they have their organizations, their magazines, they are members of a profession as recognized as medicine or

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law. There is tremendous gain in efficiency, there is also a certain loss. In the Eighties and Nineties all was experimental and adventurous, and persons with long memories recall vigorously the exhilaration of those days.

The Churches had more to do than we realize in starting many forms of such services. Young James Huntington had received his personal initiation in his happy work with his sister in the little chapel in Syracuse; during his novitiate he had immersed himself in the life of lower New York. Now, during his whole period in the Holy Cross Mission conducted by the Sisters, he was first and foremost the parish priest—and a wonderful one. Father Schlueter, now rector of St. Luke's, New York, his life-long disciple and friend, supplements the scrap-book and shares with us cherished memories of those early days; for he was one of the little boys in the parish. He remembers how when he was eight years old and had an ear-ache, Father Huntington took him to the aurist; and how later he gave the emphatic advice: "Never send people anywhere if you can help it! Always take them." Father Schlueter's reminiscences give a charming picture of parish life. Naturally, he recalls with special vividness the work with boys:

"There was always reading of stories. I remember especially Ruskin's *King of the Golden River*. There were always efforts to draw us out, sometimes pitifully responded to. He wanted to know what we thought, even as small boys. There were usually 'eats' after these meetings; I can not recall anything we ate, but I can never forget the beauty of the table. . . . In his dealings there was never a sense of 'Oh these people, what do they know? Anything is good enough.' Rather it is, 'Nothing is too good.' He used to love to recite to us. . . . I remember selections from *Alton Locke*; I remember borrowing the book. I remember some of Hood's poems: 'The Song of the Shirt,' 'The

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Bridge of Sighs'; these were the things he was thinking about, those days, praying about, breaking his heart over." The last memories may refer to a slightly later period. Yet from the very first there were traces of social passion, and of patriotic ardor. In Father Huntington's earliest activities, we find at play many of the distinctive forces of social compunction and unrest which were seeking to preserve the best values on the idealist side of American democracy.

For the most part, his work ran at first on normal parochial lines, though the creative instincts of the artist appeared in the freshness of his methods, and his love of men shone in his tender wisdom. "As to morals," he writes about the street boys to his sister, "they have a code of their own which one must teach himself how to understand and approach before he can appreciate them." As in Syracuse days, he placed great stress on music, and loved to take his boy choir with him to sing. "I remember every two weeks," says Father Schlueter, "going to Bellevue Hospital on a Thursday night (there was no chaplain then and no chapel), he and his whole choir; he had a service there and we sang hymns." One with his people in their poverty, he resented intensely any attitude that might hurt their self-respect or make them realize condescension or aloofness on the part of the community. "I remember when I was a choir boy at Holy Cross Mission, he came into the choir room white with anger. He had a newspaper clipping in his hand which announced that he was to preach at Christ Church, Brooklyn, and would bring with him 'eighteen poor boys to sing.' He was enraged at the segregation, and he told us he would not blame us if we would not go. We asked him, 'Are you going?' When he said yes, we said, 'Why, of course we will go.' I am afraid that at that time he stirred something in me that had not been there before. I

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never before felt that there was anything wrong in being called a poor boy, indeed I think I was a little bit proud of being poor. I shall never forget that Sunday afternoon service. It was a very 'swell' congregation. We began our service with hymns out of The Iron Cross hymn book. I think the first hymn before the service was 'Our Lord He was a carpenter,' the hymn before the sermon, 'I ask not for his lineage, I ask not for his name.' Then Father Huntington stood quite still in the pulpit. I can almost feel the silence now, and the attention that as a boy I felt. I shall never forget it, as his voice rang out: 'Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hand the thing that is good.' The Church was packed, but during the service there were a number of ladies that left the Church. I am afraid it was too much for them, when he began to quote Lady Macbeth's 'damned spot,' and pictured her as a lady of best society, who drew her income from slums and sweat shops. He never beat the air."

Does any one sing those fine old hymns any longer? The scrap-book gives them.

"Our Lord He was a Carpenter,  
Who wrought with saw and plane  
And did in Naz'reth thirty years  
As working man remain.  
But while He wrought, his heart and thought  
Were ever with the Lord,  
How He might best construct His Church  
And preach the glorious word.  
Then, working men, be brave, be strong,  
To serve the Lord alway.  
Remember what Augustine said:  
To labor is to pray.

"St. Peter was a fisherman  
Who toiled upon the wave.

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“St. Paul he was a tentmaker  
And, working at his trade,  
With them that were of self same craft  
For Christ he converts made.”

And again:

“I ask not for his lineage,  
I ask not for his name,

• • •

I ask not from what land he came  
Nor how his youth was nursed.  
If pure the stream, it matters not  
The source from which it burst.”

Never mind the quality of the poetry; look at the sense, and imagine the East Side boys singing those lines to a ringing tune. Social indignation more and more distinct found vent in choosing such hymns.

Speaking of sins; we learn of an interesting experiment. Father Huntington did his best to unite in religious effort the various parishes around him, however diverse; St. Augustine's Trinity, All Saints, Scammel Street, St. Mark's Chapel, the Church of the Epiphany, and others. One Lent he got them all to join in an effort to fight sin. Surely a permanent effort; one recalls Calvin Coolidge's answer when asked “what was the sermon about?” “It was about sin.” “What did the minister say?” Pause. “He was against it.” But a platitude when applied has an astonishing trick of bursting into life. Father Huntington's “project,” to use the popular term, was highly original. Union services in each parish in turn. Somehow—however did he do it?—he secured a declaration from each parish of its besetting sin. “The other congregations had fancy vices, like covetousness and anger; his own congregation came

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out bluntly, flatly, with the vice of lust or drunkenness. I think the German crowd was almost proud of having the, shall I say, more manly sin." Following the same idea, these congregations once during Lent held a mission service of instruction on their respective besetting sins; the announcing cards were enriched with penitential prayers and suggestions for resolutions. A great idea! It might be repeated nowadays, when "sin," a word hushed for many an amiable day, seems actually to be mentioned again. . . . It will be noted that these parishes represented various types of Churchmanship; another experiment in coöperation planned by Father Huntington was collecting the choirs, and leading them, vested, headed by the Cross and singing, through the wild streets of New York on the notoriously disorderly New Year's Day. "I think it did a lot for the boys; I do not know what it did for the neighborhood," says the chronicler,

In any case, the young priest's sense for the dramatic and the romantic had appropriate vent in such enterprises. The high spirits and the inventive gaiety which had enriched his family life still stood him in good stead. His remarkable gifts as a ventriloquist delighted his boys. "In telling stories on the catechism"—this is Father Schlueter again, "I have heard him so give the whistle of a train that it made one want to jump off the track. On that occasion, he told some of us that he had practised long before a mirror. Many things he did seemingly easily, and almost with perfection, but always at cost of much painstaking." He initiated much which is now a natural part of parish machinery. For instance: "The Father was one of the first to venture out into what played a large part in parish activity—a parish house. At first he used the abandoned Church of the Epiphany; later he built a large house on Avenue C and Fourth Street. It was never used as a 'feeder' for the Church, but rather the place where the congregation as a family might

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live out its social life. There was no room anywhere in the tenements for any get-together for friends. The parish house became the real playground for his people." He was surely a precursor.

### III

Soon, his activities reached far beyond parochial limits. Through the clippings so carefully preserved we watch the social worker, envisaging wider and wider horizons and slowly but surely developing into the impassioned Christian radical. In his relation to the young women of his flock and so to all other working women these tendencies first appear. Those times knew nothing of forty-hour weeks; many, both men and women, worked seventeen hours a day. "The department stores were especially culpable there. On Saturday nights they were open till midnight. Young saleswomen would stagger out of those places, ready to fall into the arms of any bad man who promised them a good time. Father Huntington organized among his parishioners at Holy Cross a group of responsible men, one of whose duties was to meet the girls of the parish who worked in the stores and see them safely home. He worked hard to persuade these Department Stores to provide seats for women, and because the girls were afraid to testify he spent hours in the stores collecting testimony himself." Those were the days when organized labor was beginning its campaign for an eight-hour day; the young monk's sympathy for the movement—then esteemed revolutionary and dangerous—expressed itself from the first in practical and personal ways. For instance, at the Clergy House there was more than once no meat for Sunday dinner, because the cook had neglected to buy supplies before twelve o'clock on Saturday, and Father Huntington intended to respect the theoretical Satur-

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day half holiday whether meat shops did or not. But particularly keen was his concern for better wages for working women, and he joined vigorously in a long campaign in which his sister Arria was also actively engaged. We find in the clippings an article about a meeting at which he was present, where she spoke, introduced by that noble pioneer in the cause of justice, Mrs. Josephine Shaw Lowell.

His social contacts became multiplied and enriched by fine fellowship with reformers. Here is the great reward of social adventuring, nor can the invigorating excitement be ignored which comes when one escapes from one's own circles, religious or social, into an alien world where those of one's own ilk await discovery. Of such joys, Father Huntington knew full measure. They began almost at once, when he took up his abode on the East Side. It was as early as 1881, for instance, that, as Mrs. Sessions tells us in her charming Memoirs, *Sixty Odd*,<sup>1</sup> he sent a very unusual girl for a visit to his family at "Forty Acres."

Her name was Leonora O'Reilly. She and her mother were of pure Irish stock. . . . The two lived together in a top tenement, both working by day and educating themselves by night. Leonora had begun very early in life to work in the sweat shops which were then a blot on the city. . . . She and her mother had accomplished an incredible amount of study. . . . In the midst of their tenement environment they were solitary, but they had found kindred spirits outside, and one of Leonora's advisers from youth up was an old man, a handworker and furniture maker born in Italy, and a friend of Mazzini with many stories to tell of the great Italian patriot, whose adventures and escapes he had to some measure shared. . . . It was through him that Leonora had acquired a cultivation which later made a place for her among the intellectuals then coming

<sup>1</sup> *Sixty Odd—A Personal History*—By Ruth Huntington Sessions. Stephen Daye Press, 1936, p. 287.

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to the struggle for better social conditions. They were cropping out here and there. . . . My brother James was active in bringing these people together.

He gave his family a very worth-while present in sending them Leonora O'Reilly. A leader for many years, she was a Founder of the Women's Trade Union League, one of eight women delegates (all in black dresses with bustles, as a recent broadcast told) to a Knights of Labor Convention in 1886. Her vital compelling figure was remote from the natural world of the Huntington family. An active anarchist, her attitude seemed to James Huntington much that of the early Christians. She was one of many whom he was now meeting, with backgrounds wholly different from his own. No wonder that with such intimacies, Arria and James Huntington became ardently devoted to the cause of Labor and of working women.

Especially did his eager sympathy go out from the very first to those women who fell by the way. His feeling was untouched by sentimentality, and his solution of a difficult problem was marked by sanctified common sense. Soon, his intelligent interest was appreciated, and his counsel sought. There is a pretty story about him at a meeting called in Boston, to start a House of Rescue for girls. Phillips Brooks was speaking with sympathy warm and eager; but he spoke, we are told, "without knowledge or understanding"; he had never lived on the East Side. When he had finished, Father Huntington, looking very young, stepped out on the platform. "Begging the pardon of my Reverend Father in God, if you do one single thing of the things he told you to do, you will wreck the whole work." The Bishop stood up, and characteristically rejoined: "Forget what I have told you and do what my younger brother has said." It took courage in those days, and in Boston, for a young priest to put himself in opposition to Phillips Brooks!

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This interest was to continue to the end of his life; his work among girls was that of the adventurer and the pioneer, and if he avoided the emotional approach of the theorist, he was equally remote, as we shall see, from endorsing the short cuts to virtue which try to protect it by mechanical control.

One of his interests was focused in a particular enterprise; this was St. Andrews' Cottage, an all-summer camp for boys at Farmingdale, Long Island, situated about a mile from the spot where the Sisters of St. John Baptist had for some years maintained a fresh-air centre for women and children; Father Huntington worked closely in many ways with these "pious ladies" who were "saved from wasting their time" by belonging to a Religious Order. He hoped to prepare city lads for rural work, and he even dreamed of a Western colony for them; those were the days when America still had a frontier, and when Horace Greeley's slogan "Go West, young man, go West," sounded like a solution to the city problem. Father Huntington dreamed many dreams that were not realized, but they were never foolish dreams. From his college days, thought of some scheme like this had haunted him. He had loved his own bits of farming; he had always taken keen delight in the study of industrial education and manual training; clippings about them fill pages of the scrap-book. He could talk out of his own observation about farming life to his boys, and presently out of his own knowledge. For in 1889 he treated himself to an Adventure. Let a scrap-book clipping of June, 1889, tell the story:

Rev. J. O. S. Huntington, son of Bishop Huntington of this city, has temporarily separated himself from his work in the lower districts of New York City, in order to recuperate his strength by country air. . . . Father Huntington has, however, chosen an odd way of seeking rest. Going to the farming country in the Western part of the county, he found work in

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the fields as a common laborer. He is employed at the usual hire on a farm near the village of Meridian, where for some time his identity was unknown to his employers or the villagers. At such times as he was able he talked in the streets of the village on religious subjects, and on Sundays has preached sermons to assembled throngs. Not until a resident of this city (evidently Syracuse) who knew the young clergyman visited the village was he identified with Father Huntington, though a rumor that he was a son of Bishop Huntington has been abroad and been discredited. The country folks were charmed with his eloquence, but ascribed it to a species of eccentricity on the part of the farm hands. Father Huntington is said to be enjoying the exercise he gets at his work, and to be building up his strength under it. As far as looks go, he is said to resemble the average run of farm hands, having discarded for the time being the robes of his Order, which he wears when speaking to the gangs and 'b'hoys' off of drays in the 'Five Points.'

Another clipping, from the *Hartford Courant*, ends on a less flattering note. Incidentally, it is worth mentioning that Father Huntington seems to have preserved with special relish clippings criticizing or disparaging his personal appearance, his powers or his ideas:

Father Huntington, whose mission at Christ Church was interesting to many people, is having a curious experience in Western New York. . . . About two weeks ago he donned a working man's blouse and went to a farm near Syracuse, where he engaged himself as a day laborer. His incognito unsuspected, he has worked side by side all day with the other hands, and in the evenings made talks with them on religion, and the Henry George land doctrine. In consequence a revival in both socialism and theology is in progress. This combination of the widest liberalism in politics and the narrowest and most restricted of creeds in religion as exhibited in this young Anglican monk is an interesting one. Were he of finer intellectual calibre, one would prophesy for him a distinct personal power in the politics and religion of the working classes.

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On this barren hill farm, labor was badly needed, poorly paid and scantily fed by the crabbed owner. There was a minimum of live-stock and an utter lack of machines; only a plough, harrow, and a cumbrous scythe. An old friend reports the story, partly from Father Huntington's own lips.

"Having always lived a sheltered life, in a cultured home he hired himself out to the farmer, with his father's warm approval. While he had worked on the farm at Hadley, it was not under a master. He could stop when exhausted, take another task to relieve strain or go to the Homestead roof-tree to read or write. Not so, as a hired man for the season.

"His first task was sprouting potatoes for the spring planting, bushels of them, and he told me it tried his mettle to stick it out. The real test came with the strenuous, hard work from sunrise to sunset, in field work. He told me that at first he became so exhausted, lame and sore, that he came near to becoming muscle bound. His hands like bird-claws, his back so sore and lame he could not stand upright, his legs and feet so bad he could hobble to the house only with difficulty and pain.

"But—he stuck to it all, until all this finally passed, and by midsummer, he was supple, lithe, sturdy and so strong that for the remainder of the season he could hold his own with any farm hand in pitching hay and mowing it away, in reaping and harvesting and performing all work demanded of a farm hand in those days. And it must be borne in mind that there was very little farm machinery during that period, practically all the work being done by 'arm-strong' methods."

This Tolstoyan episode was a very different experience from the hilarious adventures of his boyhood in his tramps through the rich New England farming country; but in writing of it to his family, he speaks of finding satisfaction "in the dreamless sleep after a full day's work, more than twelve

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hours of it;—the skilful turn of a plough at the end of a furrow, the blaze of a planet just before dawn.” “After all,” is his sister’s comment, “there was in James Huntington’s very blood an inheritance which bespoke some measure of agricultural endowment from the generations of ancestors—who had been tillers of the soil.” Even a few weeks of life like this must have imparted fresh intimacy to his training of the boys in his farm school.

There were about sixty acres of farm land and a huge barn-like building at St. Andrews. By the time the school was started, one or two men had come as novices to the infant Order, and Brother Louis, afterward Father Lorey O.H.C., was in charge. “Along with the boys he did all the cooking, for sometimes seventy people, even the baking of the bread; and all the laundry work.” It is to be feared that the experiment did not achieve just what the Founder hoped. “It was not really what one would call a fresh-air work, it was a sort of religious house,” says one picturesque account. “The background was the Chapel with its bell tolling out seven times a day, calling to office. With all his work, the good brother had time to keep the regular Hours. Above the noise of our play we would often hear the singing of the office hymn. I can recall many times when dressing hearing the Prime hymn: ‘Now that the daylight fills the sky.’ . . . Each night there was an instruction in the Chapel for the boys. One thing which I learned there which I have rarely seen in fresh-air work was that those in charge ate with the children; there was no separate table for gentlemen or priests. The first few years they tried farm work. One year there was a kitchen garden, but East Side boys ‘don’t make good farmers.’ There were always thrilling times at the camp when Father Huntington came on a visit and replaced the Headmaster for a day or two.”

Whatever Father Huntington’s disappointment, he does not

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sound discouraged in the interviews he preserves. Do the boys like country life, he was asked; and replied patiently that they hated it the first and second day, tolerated it within a week, and in a fortnight might quite possibly be wishing to leave the city for good and all. One fears lest this statement be to some degree an example of wishful thinking. But at least, the memories of other people, as quoted, make it quite clear, were illustration needed, how the monastic ideal intruded itself, rather incongruously some may say, into the most modern of Father Huntington's enterprises. Religion was never allowed to slip into the background in any of his social work.

### IV

Father Huntington's intensely American patriotism appears quite beautifully in a devotion for the Fourth of July, 1889, drawn up for the Confraternity of the Christian Life. This Society was begun as a local work in 1887. "It was at first intended," says Father Hughson, "for the purpose of gathering together a few souls who found themselves hard beset by the temptations of the East Side tenement-house life. . . . The spiritual advantages of such a society were speedily evident, and it began to increase till it is now extended into every country of the world where the Anglican Church has a footing." The Founder's ideal for a fusion of spiritual and social passion is patent in these prayers:

This is the Birthday of our nation, the day on which the brave men who represented the nation declared its national existence.

We thank God for their loftiness of thought and fearlessness of action.

We thank God for sustaining the people in the long struggle and for granting success at the end.

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We thank God for the continuance of our national life under the form of a free and democratic government.

We also make our intentions for our country at the Holy Sacrifice.

We ask God to defend it from dangers which threaten it.

We ask Him to guide and direct its progress so that justice, liberty, and happiness may be secured in every one living within its horizons.

Duty to one's country is a religious duty.

We have a national life for which we are responsible, as well as an individual life.

There are national sins as well as there are private sins.

This is plain from God's judgments against nations as expressed (?) by His prophets.

In national sin or injustice, we have our share, and we must see to it that we are doing our part in repenting of that sin, finding it out, confessing it, forsaking it.

It is a very selfish unChristian religion which does not concern itself with the common good, that is with the Commonwealth.

We make our communions on Independence day in acknowledgment of this corporate national responsibility, and seek from the Great Ruler of the Universe grace to fulfil its duties as a good citizen.

In such devotions, we see the beginning of the process not yet complete, which seeks to make the social imagination the handmaid of the Lord. Still there is acute need that the Christian faithfully, steadily, use the secret force of prayer in the service of his country. This chapter may well conclude with a passage from manuscript notes of a Retreat to the priests of his Order given years later, in 1918, by Father Huntington: addressed to priests, it applies to every member of the Mystical Body and scores for all time the attitude which would dissever religious concern from secular life:

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### **THE RELIGIOUS AND POLITICS**

The Religious does not cease to be a citizen. He has a very real and necessary relation to the nation to which he belongs. He has indeed a very special duty to perform in and for the nation. He belongs to a branch of "the Service," that which brings to the aid of the nation a Power that infinitely surpasses all material or even natural forces. But if the Religious is to pray for the needs of the nation he must know something of what those needs are. He must in some way get information as to the dangers to the State from within and from without. This brings the duty of knowing something about "politics," the art of the governing of a city or state, and the actual making and enforcing of laws and other corporate action. The Religious is not called to "go into politics" in the sense of publicly espousing a particular party or "running for office," but he ought to be thinking out certain problems by seeking to know the mind of God as to the issues of the day. Religious are to be "God's spies." They are to discern approaching danger, they see behind the camouflage of the foe, they are not ignorant of his devices. This is not to be to them a mere curiosity, but a serious and religious work. They are to fulfil, in some pre-eminent way, the function which Our Lord lays down for all His followers—to be "lights in the world," "a city set on a hill," "salt of the earth," "the pillar and ground of the truth." They are not to be "other worldly," in the sense that they merely take pleasure in spiritual things; these, as St. John of the Cross tells us, may be greed, gluttony and covetousness.

It is a difficult and perilous task which the veteran leader in the life of the Spirit enjoined on the disciples of Christ. Evasion of responsibility is so easy, religion as an "escape-Utopia" so tempting! Our next chapter will show how Father Huntington himself followed with sure tread this perplexing way. Deceptive bypaths, to the Right and to the Left, continually lead off from it. To the plain Christian, as well as to the Religious specially set apart, it is emphatically a *Via Crucis*.



## CHAPTER VII

### *THE SOCIAL CRUSADER. I*

#### I

THE scrap-book, which we cannot yet desert, gives an alluring picture of the range in the young monk's religious and intellectual interests through these years. It is not a narrow range. Here are scattered clippings about astronomical discoveries; a long article anent Richard Grant White's *Words and their Uses*, recalling Stuart Chase's *Semantics*; a translation from Horace, for an anniversary of the New York Harvard Club; a sketch of the lovely Val D'Aosta and the Grande Chartreuse; poems of all kinds, comic and sentimental, interspersed with notices of Novenas and programs for services, at the Holy Cross Mission. Even in Father Huntington's special fields, religion and social reform, he roams far; Heresy trials; discussions on Free Pews; clippings on Leo XIII, for whom he had deep admiration, and who is recommending study of St. Thomas Aquinas. Interest in theology never wavers; the problem of Probation After Death; recent books on the Atonement. Late in the collection, comes a great gathering of articles concerning the elevation of Phillips Brooks to the Episcopate and the related subject, the recall of Father A.C.A. Hall of the S.S.J.E., who was endorsing the appointment, to England. Father Hall was intimately connected with Father Huntington, whose relation with the Cowley Fathers was also close, though the distinctively English character of the Order had probably precluded him from joining it. In

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1889, for instance, we find him travelling with Fathers Hall and Field, in the steerage, on a return trip from England. Strong was the enthusiasm which he shared with Father Hall for the great New England prophet and preacher whose ecclesiastical sympathies were diametrically opposed to his own. This enthusiasm echoes that of his father, who as early as 1868 had written: "Brooks at Trinity will be an accession to our cause in Boston." Construing "Cause" in a narrow sense, perhaps the Bishop's Catholic-minded son would hardly have said just that. But great-hearted Christians recognize one another. The scrap-book includes a noble sermon at the Consecration of Mr. Brooks by Bishop Potter; and a great sheaf of clippings witnesses to concern over a controversy which stirred New England to the depths.

Careful note is taken of all Catholic trends in ritual; this is the scrap-book of a priest. But most intimate of all and most closely interwoven with wider social interests are the items concerning parochial work at his beloved little Chapel. Lenten appeals, devotional leaflets, programs, notices, little apologetics for children, a Table of Feasts and Fasts. It is touching, in the midst of clippings about burning controversial issues, and drastic social reforms, to come across a small pink card signed in a childish hand: "I will try this Lent not to eat candy in Lent, and to fight my besetting sin which is . . ." There are many such delightful tokens, mixed with such matter as appeals for the pardon of the Chicago anarchists. "Ten of these red cards returned clean will entitle me to a blue card." What privilege the blue card betokens appears not. "I promise by the help of God that I will not enter into any place where liquor is sold between the time I have my pay and eat my supper." Always recurrent, fundamental, solicitude for the welfare of the individual soul.

But outstanding, to anyone turning over these pages, is the

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witness to intense concern for all emergent phases of social reform. His vision sweeps far afield; to Father Damien and his work for lepers; to sweated labor in Germany; to tenement house reform in England—as early as 1881 comes a long clipping about the work of Octavia Hill;—to the spread of the Coöperative Movement on the Continent, to the evils of Company Stores, to the exposure of Wanamaker's White Places in Berlin, and to sundry individual cases which aroused his indignant sympathy. To us today, satiated with “social” reforms, and appeals, these tattered old clippings seem jejune enough; but they represent a fresh attack on life made by people in the Nineties. And it really seems as if Father Huntington had been in at the birth of nearly all the social reforms safely accredited now, but adventurous and perilous then. He is excited about Child Labor, he urges small parks, he helps to initiate the Consumers' League and pleads for a White List for consumers. The conditions in the State Prison at San Quentin agitate him. Anticipating settlements, he starts a scheme for “introducing producers to consumers,” which meant that he persuaded up-town people to open their homes to meetings with representative East Side workers. Lovingly preserved notices of many sermons preached on social issues by his father testify to the tenderness of an unbroken tie. It is interesting, for instance, to find a memorandum of an occasion when he gave a talk on citizenship to military cadets while Bishop Huntington presented the diplomas. One observes with surprise how many of the causes he championed and sometimes initiated have made their difficult way through slow winning of public recognition and support, up into the orbit of government. Perhaps Father Huntington would not have liked that; he was antagonistic to “socialism” as he conceived it, and constantly on his guard against any threat of government encroachments or control. But one could almost gather

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from this old scrap-book a complete roll call of measures advocated by the New Deal.

We watch him passing more and more beyond alleviations and special measures, to envisage the whole economic situation. His activities become increasingly focused in great causes which as he believed promised fundamental social reconstruction. Two such, closely related, came to command his central devotion: the movement for Single Tax, fathered by Henry George; and the Organization of Labor, then represented by the earliest and possibly most ardent Labor Movement in the United States, the Knights of Labor: movements, both, of wide scope and radical challenge.

In these movements, James Huntington found what he had long been needing, and what we all, consciously or unconsciously, need: a way of escape from the impasse where we linger helplessly. Beginning with eager evangelistic work and the sacrificial embrace of personal poverty, he had been driven from effect to cause; he was now led from cause to proffered remedies. An earlier generation had regarded "the poor" chiefly as sinners; they were incompetent and unworthy and their condition was mainly their own fault. In Father Huntington's time, another consciousness had dawned; he and his generation were seeing them not as sinners, but as victims. Peering down a still further perspective, he caught a glimpse of the hope—dynamic in the rising Labor Movement—that the working people might conceivably aid in achieving their own salvation.

The change from the first to the second position is vividly illustrated by one episode. He and his like had discovered, as we have seen, the surprising fact that economic circumstance affects character; in a succinct phrase of his they had faced "the absolute impoverishment of the soul that is the result of want and misery." He had written to a Temperance paper

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pointing out that poverty is more often than not the cause of drunkenness rather than vice versa. And, just as the sweeping over-emphasis of the Marxist on this sequence is met by violent diatribes against "Communist materialism," so reproaches were hurled at him. He was accused of asserting that material conditions were of primary importance, moral secondary; and his opponent went so far as the remark: "It were better that all citizens of a town should die of starvation than that any should be intemperate or unchaste." In 1890, no less a man than the supposed heretic Algernon Crapsey took this position and received with courtesy a patient rebuttal of the accusation. Now Father Huntington could hardly be considered indifferent to morals or to the unescapable fact of human responsibility and sin. But the teasing question began to torment his generation: "Whose sin?" That of the drunkard alone? Or that of those responsible for the almost irresistible conditions of temptation under which he lived? And who were they?

What he had really said was: "It would be the worse for Rochester under present economic conditions if all its drunken men were to become sober, because these men who are now idle and useless would become industrious and useful and would enter into competition for wages, and so increase the industrial distress." Awareness of communal responsibility, communal guilt, if you will, was slowly—oh so slowly!—to penetrate the Church, transforming its attack on evil. The process, still so incomplete, was beginning. Father Huntington replied to his opponents with spirit; pointing out the impossible conditions in the slums and doing his utmost to arouse stagnant imaginations. Rufus Weeks, among others, supported him. So we see him gradually reaching below surface effects, to economic causes; though neither then nor later did he ignore the still deeper level of sin, whence evil ultimately springs.

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To a man in his early thirties, groping about in that dark underground region of causes, there was imperative need not only of enlarged imagination but of penetrating analysis. As people noted Father Huntington's uncompromising career, murmurs of "Socialist" began to rise. No wonder, when he was heard to refer to Jesus as "The Crucified Revolutionist," or to say: "If Jesus Christ had lived in these days, he would have been called an anarchist, or some other kind of ist." Since the time of Kingsley and of Bishop Huntington's beloved master, Maurice, the Anglican Church had been accused of "flirting with socialism." But it was no fault of Father Huntington if she did. He was never a socialist. His intense feeling for individual liberty prevented his alliance with that Fabian type of socialism which emphasized the theoretically omnicompetent state, and which was as Strachey says the only type that had penetrated England or America in those pre-Marxist days. Father Huntington's attitude is amusingly shown in an attack on Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, a book creating great excitement at that time in Nationalist Clubs in Boston and elsewhere. The theories it presented, said he, reminded him of the benevolent elephant, who inadvertently crushed the poor little brood of partridges he had been trying to protect. James Huntington would have had no sympathy with the Totalitarian State, Fascist or Communist. But he was in sad need of some constructive vision.

## II

Such came to him, not primarily through the Labor Movement, which offered chiefly a method, with limited objectives, but through a social theory demanding basic and radical change: the Single Tax movement of Henry George. Socialism, he remarked rather paradoxically, was "not radical

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enough." To the Single Tax movement, he unswervingly adhered during the rest of his life.

It is easy to see how it met his needs. He knew at its best a rural life where land monopoly had not yet reared its ugly head. He loved the wide freedom, the wholesome life, of the farmer; as we have seen, he had shared the delights of a countryside as yet unspoiled, and had even for a brief period worked on the soil. A long clipping on Old Hadley and its charms carefully preserved in his scrap-book testifies to his affections. From such surroundings he had come to take up his dwelling among the congested horrors, the smells, noises, miseries, of the city tenements. His Farm School had pointed to his hope that deliverance might be found in return to the land. The Housing Problem vexed him as much as it does us in 1940; his agitation for Tenement House Reform had brought him in sharp impact against exploitation by the landlords, and had been the subject of some of his most powerful addresses. The Single Tax doctrine, the necessity that the Land be returned to the people, must have brought his seeking mind intense relief.

Father Huntington always believed in private property. Not for himself: he and the members of his Order were to own nothing save the ebony Cross they wore. But this attitude was for the "called" alone and bore no relation to normal life for the majority; he never gained a glimpse, as some have done, of prophetic implications for a wider social future in the monastic counsel of Poverty. But private ownership of the holy "land," or even the smallest portion of the soil of the universal earth-mother, was obnoxious to him. In the address in which he scores Bellamy (a lecture, says the comment, "highly interesting and philosophical") he says plainly: "Land is never in its nature private property and can never become so."

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He found in Henry George a leader after his own heart; and close friendship bound the two men together. George was twelve years older than James Huntington, having been born in Philadelphia in 1839. Traditions of piety were in his family. He was brought up an Episcopalian, and "might well have been headed for the path which led to an Episcopal Bishopric,"<sup>1</sup> but his father's income was \$800.00 a year. His schooling was found in knocking about the world. Now sailor, now journalist, now in Australia, now in the West, now in New York, often in extreme poverty, he passed through sundry religious crises, but settled into repudiation of organized Christianity in any form. This did not shut him out from profound spiritual experience, however. "Because you are not only my friend, but a priest and a Religious," he said to someone—not Father Huntington, "I shall say something that I never before told to anyone. Once in daylight and in a city street there came to me a thought, a vision, a call,—give it what name you will. But every nerve quivered. And there and then I made a vow. Through evil and through good, whatever I have done and whatever I have left undone, to that I have been true."

*Progress and Poverty*, his great book, begun in 1877, was published in 1879. He set part of the type himself.<sup>2</sup> "When I had finished the last page, in the dead of night, when I was entirely alone, I flung myself on my knees and wept. The rest was in the Master's hands."

The book had an amazing success. In '84 George was lecturing in Ireland, in England; the *Memoirs of Mary Gladstone*, among other records, witness to the degree to which he stirred the intellectually and socially great. He had far more influence

<sup>1</sup> G. R. Geiger. *The Philosophy of Henry George*. By permission, The Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1933, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 42, 51.

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than Marx with the Fabians, whose star was just rising; and though Marx scornfully called *Progress and Poverty* "the capitalist's last ditch," that book did more than any other of the period to make many thinking men break with the old classical economics. John Dewey, in 1933,<sup>1</sup> pointing out the breadth and depth of his social philosophy, said: "The practical side of George's program is bound . . . to come forward for increased attention. It is impossible to conceive any permanent scheme of tax reform which does not include at least some part of George's appropriation by society for social purposes of rental value of land." No wonder that Father Huntington was his disciple: "The problem that George faced was the problem of changing the economic background against which man's life was lived, so that man himself might be changed. It was an attempt to approach morals by way of economics." Concerning Christianity, George said words that might have been an echo of Father Huntington's own or of the Bishop, his father:

"It (Christianity) struck at the very basis of that monstrous tyranny which then oppressed the civilized world; it struck at the fetters of the captive and at the bonds of the slave, at that monstrous injustice which allowed a class to revel on the proceeds of labor, while those who did the labor fared scantily. That is the reason why early Christianity was persecuted. And when they could no longer hold it down, then the privileged classes adopted and perverted the new faith, and it became in its very triumph not the pure Christianity of the early days, but a Christianity that to a very great extent was the servitor of the privileged classes."<sup>2</sup>

A Roman Catholic priest, Father McGlynn, was also a convert to the Single Tax. Soon he, Henry George, and Father

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Introduction XI.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 341.

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Huntington became a well-known and inseparable trio in New York; it was a good fellowship. George came there in 1886, and ran for Mayor against Hewitt and Theodore Roosevelt. Father Huntington became almost at once an active advocate; his first prominent appearance was apparently on March 1, 1887, at a great meeting in Cooper Union, called ostensibly in the interests of his old friend, Tenement House Reform. The speakers were himself, Henry George, Samuel Gompers, and Louis Post. Other labor leaders were present. "The crowning success of the evening," says a newspaper comment, "was unmistakeably the glowing fervor of the Rev. J. O. S. Huntington's stirring appeal for human homes for human beings." A letter was read from Father McGlynn, who was speaking elsewhere. George said what Father Huntington must have liked to hear: "I am not so much in favor of tenement house reform as of tenement house abolition." The crusade was on! News of the meeting spread far and wide; a report in German appeared, and was eagerly read, it may be hoped, by Father Huntington's parishioners. Mayor Hewitt, who had been elected, endorsed the need of reform in a letter to the *Times*. The secular press took up the Tenement problem, and tried to rouse the city; but did not get much beyond a familiar attitude, "Something must be done."

Although Father Huntington was quite capable of demonstrating the economic theory of Single Tax, and did so on occasion, his special line was revelation of the impossible evils resulting in his own observation from the private ownership of land. George welcomed his coöperation, and wrote with warm appreciation of his numerous addresses and of an article he wrote on Tenement House Reform in the July *Forum* for 1887. "Father Huntington's article ought to make the people of this city hang down their heads in shame," was the comment of the *Tribune*.

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Early in that year, a report spread that he had withdrawn from the movement, which had become more and more involved with politics; and his reply shows that he was feeling difficulties in the situation which were to trouble him with increasing pressure: he intends to change somewhat his line of attack:

“Taking part in politics interferes with my religious duties and therefore I shall aid the cause in a quieter manner. . . . I feel that in my position as a parish priest I can aid it more than in any other way. . . . Mind you, I don’t regard its assuming a political aspect as a mistake, for I think that is the only way in which it can be made successful. I suppose you want to know if I have been influenced by those above me in ecclesiastical authority. I tell you in advance that I have not.” He adds that he may speak again. “I have always been heart and soul in the Labor Movement. I am still and always shall be.”

He did “speak again,” and his work for his great Cause continued with unabated ardor, against obstacles on every side. Like many before and since, he moved between intelligent radicals indifferent or hostile to the Church, and conventional Christianity, indifferent or hostile toward social change. The second situation confronted him, to his grief and pain, in his own parish; for let no one think that his normal work was neglected. He wanted to rouse his young men to share in his mission and his zeal; he felt that he was bringing them a message of more than personal salvation; Alas, cruel disappointment awaited him. Those young East Siders did not respond. His sorrow, and also his excellent pastoral technique, are touchingly conveyed by a letter, preserved by him in several copies, breathing in every line the solicitude with which he watched over these his children.

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ADDRESS TO ST. ANDREW'S GUILD, AUGUST 28, 1887.

I have written down what I want to say. First that I may use as few words as possible, and save your time. 2), that there may be no uncertainty as to the exact words that I shall use, and no question may arise as to what I have said. But before entering on the subject, I beg to you to consider how painful to me is the necessity to speak as I shall.

1) Because it is a confession of failure in what has been the principal external work of my life hitherto. I must confess my incompetence to do what for five years I have tried to do.  
2) Because I must say what will hurt, it may be what will anger, those who hear me. I will not say that each one of you is my personal friend, and that a special affection gathers about each one of you in my heart, but *I will* say that you are far more truly than most of you realize, my *Only* personal friends.

If in spite of this I go on to read what is written here, you will believe that it is from a feeling of duty that, cost what it will, I must obey....

My dream was that as the Guild increased and its members grew older, I should find them in the very vanguard of the sworn servants and soldiers of Christ, who would gather in ever larger numbers in the mission Church of the Holy Cross. I thought the Guild would become the very heart of the work I hoped to do for God on this East Side. For a time it seemed that this might come to pass. .... When I entered into this grand movement of "The Land for the People" I rejoiced in the thought that those whom I had prepared for Confirmation and to whom I had again and again reached out the Body and Blood of Christ, would stand with me in the fight. And I saw too, and you will bear me witness, that I plainly warned you of it, that if this did not come about, then I had better skulk away somewhere, a failure if not a sham. God did not send me down here to preach and minister year by year to a parcel of girls and children.

Well, that was my hope. Have I any reason to think that it will be fulfilled? Is it not true that week by week, month by

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month, the Church has had less influence over you . . . until now a number of you have not been within the Church walls for months, and only four or five out of thirty members are present before the Altar on Sunday? Is it not true that those who do come almost always come in late and *Sit* through the Service, and the rest stand outside on the street corner or amuse themselves in the pool room on the next block? . . . And if these things are true would it not be mere cowardice and hypocrisy in me to pretend that our work is not a failure? . . .

Oh, when I think of what you my brothers might do for yourselves and for all these associates, for the great cause of truth and right, and for the bringing of a better day to the suffering sinning multitudes all around us, I could beg you even on my knees to make St. Andrew's Guild what we have so often prayed it might be.

Your loving Superior . . .

### III

Here was "the dream" of a man still young; alas for dreams! Father Huntington was without honor in his own tiny country, and perhaps it was small consolation to him that he was becoming one of the most prominent figures, not only in New York, but all over the United States. Meanwhile, water ran swiftly under the bridge. The dramatic story of his comrade, Father McGlynn, is well known; the rising opposition to him from Roman Catholic officials, conservative in animus, his summons to Rome, his refusal to comply, his excommunication. Whatever be claimed for unity within that communion, conflicting currents ran as turbulently in it then as they do now. At the peak of the excitement, which surged through the whole religious world, came a thrilling moment in Father Huntington's public career. Father McGlynn, who had been active in the Irish Land League and knew well the technique of agitation, had formed an "Anti-Poverty Society," to be the

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instrument of the Single Tax movement. On July 18, 1887, a meeting of the Society was called at the Academy of Music. Fifteen hundred members responded. Louis F. Post was in the Chair; Henry George was present and told the audience that Father McGlynn was away speaking in St. Louis. The fight centering in support of the recalcitrant priest was at its most acute. The papers report:

“A dark ascetic-looking young Puseyite priest clad in monastic garb was the central figure on the stage at the Academy of Music last night. He held a Bible in his hand.” “The character of the welcome accorded to the frocked stranger was volcanic,” said *The New York Times*. “When his tall form, enveloped in a long black priestly robe, his smoothly shaven face, closely cropped hair, and the Cross of ebony that lay upon his breast were noted, the people rose from their seats, thinking that another priest had severed his connection with the Roman Catholic Church, and gave vent to their feelings in whoops and cheers. The newcomer bore his honors calmly, and when the demonstration had lasted what he considered a proper period, he rose and bowed, not as if he were overwhelmed or even deeply touched, but as if he considered it the correct thing to do.”

“The Church,” said Father Huntington, “is the great Anti-Poverty Society,” and he continued in characteristic vein. He began by telling of a slave he knew in his boyhood, who paid for himself three times over and was forced back into slavery each time. “There are working men in this country who have paid for themselves not three times but thirty times. And they do not belong to themselves yet.” Going on to tell why, he said there were two ways in which some men have managed to monopolize the fruits of the earth. One way is by getting hold of the labor, the other is by getting hold of the land. The few no longer own the labor, but they still own the land, and

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hence, while chattel slavery has been abolished, industrial slavery still exists. "Make the men free," he said, "and make the land free and then you will have what God meant to be." He was frequently interrupted by applause.

Henry George, introduced as "the prophet from San Francisco," then came forward to speak, and the audience cheered for fully two minutes. He said: "My friends, I sat here last Sunday night at that great meeting (when the excommunication had been announced) with a feeling of solemnity. It seemed to me a most important and significant occasion. At last the issue had been made. At last the line had been drawn. At last the heaviest condemnation in the ecclesiastical authority had been thundered, not merely at the priest of the people, but at the cause of the people. And there was to it in this great meeting a most fitting response. The mightiest host in the world is now clearly and fully arrayed on our side. As Father Huntington said here tonight, it is indeed the spirit of Christianity against the perversion of Christianity; and I know I speak for more than myself when I speak of the deep satisfaction it gives me to find that this movement is taking clearly and decisively a religious phase. That we feel we are . . . working in our little way with a power that is mightier than man.

"I was asked some years ago to address a Congress of the Episcopal Church on the Question 'Why working men do not go to Church?' and I told them that it was because the Church had turned its back upon the working man. It was because the Church in all its branches and denominations, discarding the teachings of its Founder, had become the friend and defender of the rich and the monopolies. It is the deepest tragedy of the ages that today, nineteen centuries after Christ died, the so-called Christian world is full of misery and suffering and poverty; that in the so-called Christian world the God that is really worshipped is Mammon."

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Father McGlynn had been speaking in Philadelphia; the comments of Henry George a little later show how deeply he was moved and sustained by his two allies:

"The cheers that ran in McCaull's opera house on Sunday night when this priest of the real Christ preached word of the new Crusade to the Philadelphia Anti-Poverty Society, like the cheers that rang through the New York Academy of Music when the Episcopal priest of the people stood in the place of the Catholic priest of the people prove that now as of old the hearts and the consciences of men respond to the call of justice."

It was all very well for the *Times* to sneer, as it did, at Henry George. Echoes of such words, whether spoken by "the prophet of San Francisco" or by Savonarola, reverberate a long time.

Father Huntington had asked another clergyman to speak at the meeting in the Academy of Music; but had received the not unnatural reply that the Bishop must first be consulted. Asked if he might not himself be cast out of the Church, like Father McGlynn, he replied: "My Bishop is not that kind of a Bishop, and I am not that kind of a priest." He spoke truly, for Bishop Potter never failed him. Many of the clergy, however, were sharply indicted by the Labor organ, the *Leader*, for their unsympathetic attitude. Saintly and beloved Dr. Houghton of the Church of the Transfiguration was one of these; and this must have been a special sadness to James Huntington, for the bond between the two men had been strong. Dr. Houghton entirely disapproved of Father McGlynn: "A priest's place is at the altar. What if a dying person should require his services, and they had to send for him to a political meeting?" He believed that Father McGlynn had been used as a tool for politicians. Father Huntington pursued his own conception of the scope of the Divine

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service, and "the Episcopal monk of the United Labor Party," speaking always with fearless honesty and arousing now admiration, now resentment, became a well-known figure in a much larger area than New York.

It often happens that the Papal See is far more liberal than its advisers. Let it be remembered to its credit that in due course of time Father McGlynn was thoroughly vindicated and was reinstated. He died in full communion with the Church which had never ceased to be his spiritual home.



## CHAPTER VIII

*THE SOCIAL CRUSADER. II*

## I

THE Single Tax was an economic theory of social salvation, the organization of Labor was a human struggle for freedom, and the two in Father Huntington's mind were interwoven. When the scrap-book is about two-thirds filled, its interest in manual training and working men's clubs yields to rich and abundant material concerning the struggle of the workers for justice. In 1889 and 1890, we find full reports of a Miners' Strike in Spring Valley, Illinois, where the "interlocking Directorates" of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad and the Town Site Company combined to create an impossible situation. Articles about the "Slaves of W. L. Scott, the Coal King," and letters from Henry Demarest Lloyd are given. Father Huntington visited the scene in September. To this strike experience belongs a story narrated by Spencer Miller, Jr. in the Labor Sunday message of the Department of Christian Social Service of the Episcopal Church for 1935:

"After a prolonged coal strike in that state" (Illinois) "it was suggested that a mediator be selected to try and adjust the difficulty between the operators and miners; Father Huntington was agreed upon. He came to the State, and succeeded in winning the trust of both sides and finally secured a very satisfactory agreement. The miners who were deeply moved by his great goodness as well as by his fairness were anxious to express to him in some tangible form their appreciation

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for his services. They realized that a gift of money was not only impossible but improper. Some of the miners, however, seeing that his shoes were worn and badly broken, took up a collection and presented him with a new pair of shoes. This was a touching tribute which he never forgot."

On his return to New York, he was interviewed by a reporter from the *World*:

"Who told you I was going to give up my priestly office and devote my time to the Labor Cause?" enquired Father Huntington. "Let me tell you that it is out of my power to give up an office which once received is received for ever. That I have not neglected my duties during my absence in Illinois may be inferred when I tell you that in my ten days' stay there I was present at seven public services, preached twice, celebrated the Holy Eucharist once, and baptized thirty-five children."

"But I was informed you were going to learn a trade, and now-a-days priests are not tradesmen," said the reporter.

"That is true, but there is no reason why they should not be. Christ was a carpenter and Paul a tent-maker. I have not had time to learn a trade. I would like to say that it is because I am a priest, and as such an officer of that which by its principles is the most uncompromisingly democratic and revolutionary society that the world has ever seen, that I have been led to become a Free-Trader, a Single Taxist, and a Knight of Labor."

"What was the condition of the miners you saw in Illinois?" asked the reporter.

"It was deplorable." He went on, to present with outspoken indignation a dark and shocking picture. A long letter to the Corporation of the Northwestern Railroad denounces their attitude, in luring miners to a region where "promises of steady work and good pay were all falsified."

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In this connection, we might mention a clipping in the scrap-book. Rev. W. L. Bull wrote at about this time to *The Churchman*, pleading for an Order in which every man should learn a trade and which should be self-supporting through the labor of its members. Such a plan, mooted more than once with sundry variations, has never yet proved practicable. Father Huntington kept the clipping without comment; but that the proposal attracted his interest, is clear from his having preserved it.

He is here, there, everywhere. In Memphis, Tennessee, he addresses the Knights of Labor on the Great Dock Strike he had witnessed the preceding year, 1889, in London. He is in Toronto, in Minneapolis, he investigates living conditions in St. Louis. Speaking on the Carnegie Corporation, he scores their "insolent economic despotism," and breaks into long quotations from William Morris's "March of the Workers." He addresses the K. of L. watch-case makers. In Milford, Delaware, he arouses anger, not so much from his treatment of the fairly remote topic of Single Tax as by his allusions to the race question. Expressing "marked dissatisfaction," about fifty left the hall. A not unfriendly, though patronizing, comment says: "The gentleman is young and enthusiastic, but in future years he will see the visionary character of his own remarks. . . . The truth was not fitly spoken. . . . It is doubtful if he could have selected an audience where his remarks would have given greater offense. To say that men should not own land, should not live in ease and comfort on a renter's toil, in Delaware, where laws are made to protect the landlord and oppress the laborer . . . it was the height of folly. Some were saying that the speaker should be driven out of town."

The young crusader had at least the comfort, no small one, of warm support and fellowship in his own family. His sister Arria and he stood shoulder to shoulder, as we know, in the

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active and sometimes stormy movement for the organization of working women which led to the Women's Trade Union League; we also find Arria addressing the Knights of Labor. It is pleasant to note the quiet but uncompromising figure of Bishop Huntington behind his son. The Bishop was a vigorous supporter of the Single Tax; he often "expressed himself strongly against class divisions in American society." One of the most finished and eloquent of contemporary preachers, author of devotional volumes which reached widespread circulation in England as well as America, he yet could strike a clear prophetic note, as in an article he contributed to *The Forum* in 1890, on Christianity's duty to industrial slaves. Witness, also, this extract from a letter of his to a Church Council:

"Intense political and commercial forces are ready to push their way into the Church, to magnify its material and secular aspects in commercial and political centres, and to match the wealth and official pageantry and corporate power of the world with hierachial and other like distinctions in the kingdom of God."

And again: "In prosperous times like ours and in affluent communities, anti-Christ himself goes to Church, patronizes preaching, buys a pew, gets himself elected to the vestry, and takes a hand in shaping the policy of the establishment and, by blandishment or bluster, in pitching the keys of the pulpit. All that you may hear said of the mischief of this secular corruption in disordering Christ's family, vitiating doctrine, emasculating the manhood of the ministry, and lowering the standard of personal righteousness, rather understates than exaggerates the fact. It is not scientific doubt, not atheism, not pantheism, not agnosticism, that in our day and in this land is likely to quench the light of the Gospel. It is a proud, sensuous, selfish, luxurious, church-going, hollow-hearted prosperity."

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Father Huntington must have revelled in that clipping; he kept two copies of it. The Huntington family might be and were divided in ecclesiastical sympathies, but they were fully at one in unworldliness, in devotion to social righteousness, and in fiery courage. Father and son both were of the lineage of the prophets, and of the great leaders in the Church of Christ who feel, as none but her children can, her sins and failures, yet who know also that she feeds men with the Bread of Life.

In Nebraska, speaking there for the first time, James Huntington expressed at once his loyalty and his sorrow. His topic was "The Haves and the Have Nots."

"It is the masses against the classes. Here is the riddle of the Sphinx. If society fails to solve the problem, it will be destroyed. The Church cannot keep it out, and it is a shame, a burning shame, that she is not the leader of the movement (for the people's freedom) instead of having it forced upon her." The speaker, we are told, then explained the origin and purpose of the Church. He said in substance:

"About nineteen hundred years ago, a wage worker, a carpenter, talked to the people, telling them of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Man. His fellow laborers, his disciples, were among the poorest,—fishermen and laborers. They were of the people, and did not talk at them. . . . They were not friends of the poor, they were the poor themselves. They preached the equality of men. . . . For 200 years the Church was of the people and the people and the Church were poor. But what of religion today? . . . The Church was meant to be the Great Emancipator. It has forgotten its mission. It has turned from the paths marked out by its great Founder. But I am not decrying the Church. I believe in the Church. If I did not, I would not be in her priesthood. . . . I want to point out to the Church why the common people

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have lost faith in her. I want her to again take up her mission, as the leader, the hope, the salvation of mankind."

"Father Huntington," says the comment, "is not an eloquent speaker, and makes no attempts at rhetorical flights. While speaking he is consumed with the fire of an intense earnestness, which shows in every feature of his expressive face and in every movement of his body. His words are rather chosen to make men act than to please by their easy flow. He is a young man of about thirty, and appeared to be in the very flush of youthful vigor."

He confessed candidly with no attempt to camouflage the tragic fact, that the Church was viewed by the workers with profound distrust. The Labor Press at times spoke out to this same effect without reserve: as in this article, following the address just quoted:

"Father Huntington may be right and the Churches wrong; that point I won't discuss. But it seems to me that he can not always remain within the pale of organized Christianity while denying what it believes. Whatever may have been true of the Christianity of Christ, the Christianity of today upholds and approves the social system which produces rich men and poor men. It upholds the theory of private ownership of land. . . . It is entirely committed to vested interests, and must frown on any attempts to subvert them. And if Father Huntington or any other reformer thinks he can make over the Church in this respect, he will speedily find out his mistake."

The "vested interests" were not slow in speaking out on their side. Today a radical clergyman may meet sneers and disapproval, but no one is likely to be surprised and shocked by him. But listen to the *Monetary Times*, of Toronto, on a speech made in that city: "Father Huntington belongs to the order of cranks, and is in a fair way of doing as much mischief

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as one man can readily do in this world. He came to Canada to preach the gospel, not of peace but of confiscation." The young prophet was under fire from another quarter, too; in a talk to women, "he unmasked himself, and appeared in his true colors as a fully developed Romanist." Detonations of more than one battle still raging sound in such paragraphs. He kept untroubled on his way; and *The Canadian Churchman* rallied to his support:

"The soft answer is an engine against wrath of which no man knows the value more than Father Huntington. Notwithstanding the amazing folly, the crude ignorance, the blind wrath, of many correspondents who question his mission in the daily papers of Canada, leaving them open to tremendous rejoinder, the gentle father leaves such blows—so sorely tempting to a man of power—unstruck. His most effective weapon has been gentle remonstrance, whereby he disarms his most bitter opponents."

## II

He must have been enjoying himself mightily; fullness of life was his; and there is no better fun than turning the other cheek. We must not for a moment forget the background of silent prayer and praise whence he drew his strength, as day by day, hour by hour, he obeyed his monastic rule. It is interesting to garner a few more personal impressions of him as a speaker, during this period of his early prime, at a time before he had entirely come to his own. He kept clippings of both praise and the reverse. A report comes from Boston: "He is a young man of medium height and light complexion, and with pleasant intelligent cast of countenance. . . . He is the ascetic in embryo. . . . He falls just short of being eloquent; his vocal intonations become somewhat monotonous, and at

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no times did he make a gesture, thus giving to his manners an appearance of constraint." *The Church Messenger* of Charlottesville is more enthusiastic: "The Rev. J. O. S. Huntington does not look to be a man desirous to be the cause of a profound ecclesiastical sensation. While he sat on the rostrum he appeared as young as the youngest of the students facing him. He is not only young looking but youthful looking. . . . I think it is safe to say that Father Huntington will never be an old man, not even if the ragamuffins of the East Side graciously allow that he live a century." "To look at Father Huntington in his freshness, his manliness, his simplicity, to observe the earnest vigor of his bearing, one can readily estimate him as a man taking hold of what he knows to be a great lifework." He spoke with "genuine and captivating simplicity," "utter and charming lack of display." His talk was full of humour.

A Western view, of somewhat later date, is entertaining: "His platform presence is superb. He is tall, lithe, and distinguished looking, and there is that about him which shows the best of breeding and the possession of all the instincts of the gentleman. But the metropolitan (?) bringing up of the man shows itself despite the disguise of the long cassock reaching almost to his ankles, [Page the Rev. George Huntington] his close shaven face and outward odor of sanctity. In his deep bass voice there is the suggestion of the cockney accent, and his walk and manners suggest a fair acquaintance with the ball-room."

It was probably true that he was not so good a speaker as his father. That is the unvaried evidence of those who remember both. But he had power. He gave serious and painstaking preparation to every sermon or address, however casual the occasion; and he was therefore in full possession of every faculty with which the Lord had endowed him. One impres-

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sion his hearers received was: "Here is God's plenty"; for the copious flow of his speech never faltered, and through unfailing dignity, sanity and restraint, shone the complete vision and devotion of the man. Whether his theme was the interior life of faith, the mysteries of the Creed, the sins of the Church or her glories, the industrial tragedy or the way of escape as he discerned it, he gave his hearers all that was in him to give. And he had one great gift, the sense of fun. "Brilliant scintillations of wit and humor," says one newspaper, refreshed his hearers. His excellent memory stood him in good stead; it was stored with all sorts of verse, from sentimental ditties and great passages from the classics to clever bits of social satire. Some of these he used again and again. Hearers will not forget the gusto with which the lines scoring complacent philanthropy would ring out:

"Organized charity, scrimped and iced,  
In the Name of a cautious, statistical Christ."

Or that other biting passage:

"Now Dives feasted sumptuously and was gorgeously arrayed,  
Not at all because he liked it, but because 'twas good for trade.  
That others might have calico he clothed himself in silk,  
And surfeited himself with cream, that they might have the  
milk.

And e'en to show his sympathy with the deserving poor,  
He did no stroke of work himself, that they might have  
the more."

His delivery of these lines justified one critic who remarked:

"He is an excellent dialect comedian." He especially liked to quote them when he was dwelling, as he often did, on the convenient fallacy so well scored by Ruskin's rebuttal in a phrase: "The production of luxuries can not relieve ultimate distress." The writings of the great Victorian prophets who

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were either his contemporaries or in the immediate background were at his tongue's end. We have already said how, in sharply criticizing the Carnegie Company and the Steel corporation, he swung into the splendid rhythms of William Morris's "March of the Workers":<sup>1</sup>

"What is this the sound and rumor? What is this that all men hear?

Like the wind in hollow valleys when the storm is drawing near,

Like the rolling on of ocean in the even tide of fear?

'Tis the People marching on.

"Forth they come from grief and torment; on they wend toward health and mirth.

All the wide world is their dwelling; every corner of the earth.

Buy them, sell them, for thy service? Try the bargain, what 'tis worth,

For the days are marching on."

His sermons at this period—and indeed till the end of his life—abounded in illustrations of the social radicalism implicit in the Scriptures. The Exodus from Egypt expounded as a great strike; as of course it was. The Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday treated as a political demonstration. In a sermon for Advent I, we listen to him saying:

"Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold thy king cometh.' Is He not come? Is He not already manifesting Himself in His dear American nation? The voice of the People is the voice of God, and the people are speaking in louder and louder tones. New issues have come and the Lord of multitudes musters the hosts of the battle." He goes on, drawing warning from the French Revolution, when the Church committed as he thinks the fatal error of being on the wrong side; "Unless

<sup>1</sup> "The Pilgrims of Hope and Chance for Socialists," William Morris, published by Longmans, Green & Co., N. Y., 1915.

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we repent, Christ will come even as He came in France, in the blood and fire and vapor of smoke of the first Revolution." And he introduces a ringing quotation from Shelley's superb "Masque of Anarchy,"

"What is Freedom? Ye can tell  
That which slavery is too well....

Tis to work and have such pay  
As just keeps life from day to day,  
In your limbs as in a cell,  
For the tyrants' use to dwell.

"So that ye for them are made  
Loom and plough and sword and spade  
With or without your own will bent  
To their defense and nourishment."

Sermons as well as addresses must have given his hearers small electric shocks. Carried away by his fiery, though always carefully measured speech, they might well have remembered the great roll call from Jeremiah and Amos to John the Baptist, and, jumping down the centuries, to San Bernardino of Siena, to Savonarola; later still, to Lamennais, Lacordaire, Ketteler, and to those immediate precursors, Kingsley and Maurice, who had inspired James Huntington's youth. It is to be hoped that a few at least in his congregations were aware of the men in England who at this same time were waging a fight identical with his own: men like Scott Holland, Gore, and the other leaders of the Christian Social Union.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that he preached during these years chiefly or wholly on social lines. He was equally concerned with championing the Christian faith, source for him of all enduring social progress. "Those were the days," writes a woman of long memories, "when Father Huntington knocked the bottom out of the followers of

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Ingersoll, and convicted them of ignorance, and then gave them the foundation of 'Truth' on which to stand. And never once mentioned anybody but Jesus." All the time, moreover, he was ministering to his little flock at the Holy Cross Mission. In January, 1885, the ground was broken for the new building between Avenue C and Fourth Street. It was consecrated on the fifteenth of September by Bishop Potter. Fathers Field and Hall of the S.S.J.E. as well as his own brother Father Sturges Allen were in the procession. His friends were around him. A happy day! No matter what alarms and retreats were sounding, what large causes claimed his attention, or what griefs were his over the shortcomings and apathy of the Church, his first and most detailed efforts were within his own small parish and on accredited evangelical lines.

## IV

"Organized Christianity," subject of such bitter remarks, was waking up. And not only in America or in the Protestant Episcopal communion. We have just spoken of the great movement stirring in England; but not to look farther afield, those last years of the nineteenth century were a great period for what in the United States came to be called "The Social Gospel." Perhaps it was not a very profound Gospel. Doubtless it stood in peril which sometimes overwhelmed it, of deflecting religion from its one abiding source in the Christian faith and in personal consecration to the Living God. The trail of humanism and of secularism was sometimes upon it, and too often its advocates were guilty of declining to a merely ethical level on which Christianity can never long survive. Yet it was achieving a great work; and the names of its pioneers, Josiah Strong, Washington Gladden, Francis

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Peabody, and above all, Walter Rauschenbusch, will always stand with the name of James Huntington, in the roll of honour of the Church Universal. We cannot produce evidence that Father Huntington was in touch with any of these men; at first, and for many long years, he played, more credit to him, a singularly lone hand. But we do find a few allusions to one other true and valiant saint, the Rev. W. D. P. Bliss of the Anglican communion, who on different lines, but with much the same social outlook, was developing in Boston the Church of the Carpenter, and editing his intrepid little paper, *The Dawn*. The two men should have been friends, in spite of their widely severed ecclesiastical traditions; but Bliss was an avowed socialist, and with socialism Father Huntington, as we know, had no sympathy. Except for his father and Bishop Potter he must have known some solitary years.

Yet helpers rallied round him when on May 18, 1887, he founded a Society which was to have a long fruitful life: the Church Association for the Advancement of the Interests of Labor, popularly known as Cail. The Society drew inspiration from Bishop Potter's noble pastoral letter of the preceding year, May 1886, which spoke of the rare opportunity of the Church to mediate between Labor and Capital, and made, perhaps for the first time, the now familiar assertion that Labor is not a commodity. It came together at Father Huntington's invitation, "with the intention of petitioning Almighty God that the clergy of this branch of the Church may be moved to perform their duty to the working men of our land." Dr. De Costa was the first chairman; Bishop Potter, true to his lights, was present, as were Dr. Rainsford, Dr. Rylance, and Dr. Sill, father of the present Head of Kent School. The plan of organization was submitted by the Rev. W. D. P. Bliss; as social movements in the Church should always do, it cut across all divisions in religious opinion and Churchmanship.

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On October 26th of this same year, Dr. De Costa presiding, Bishop Huntington addressed the meeting; and he served as President from this time till his death in 1904, being succeeded by Bishop Potter.

In its inception, Cail was obviously affected by the stir roused by George's Anti-Poverty Society; and presently, the charge of connection with the Single Tax movement wakened stormy dissent. Hot debate ended only when Father Huntington, obviously in a magnanimous spirit, moved the resolution adopted that the Association have nothing to do with politics. Outside that area, there was plenty of action needed. Cail was nothing if not practical and realistic. At about the same time, or a little later, over in Boston, a number of friends of Mr. Bliss, including Mr. (Bishop) Brent and sundry settlement workers, started a series of tracts on the model of the English tracts of the Christian Social Union. They were good tracts. Boston was always as sure as Plato that all the world needed was education. Each city to its own.

Father Huntington took great joy in Cail. He certainly spoke out at its meetings. "The rich walk to balls and entertainments over the bodies of their brothers and sisters. . . . I don't say that the clergy condone the sins of rich men, but with some I fear a rich good man is a little better than a poor good man,"—a remark that was greeted with laughter. "The road we are taking is the road the Church has got to walk if she is going to live at all." At a meeting addressed by the Secretary, that dauntless and joyous woman Harriette Keyser, on Free Pews, some one broke out on the floor: "The more discontent the better." Father Huntington applauded vigorously. Miss Keyser, with her life-long friend Margaret Lawrence, served Cail with unstinted devotion for many years. She was always on the defensive, insisting vehemently, sometimes against a good degree of evidence, that the Church

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was as radical as Cail itself. Perhaps one could do that with an official like Bishop Potter, always her dear friend, behind one. In any case there were good points in Cail's policy. The tracts issuing from Boston were excellent, as has been said; but did any working man ever read one of them? Cail, on the other hand, was in close practical fellowship with the Labor Unions. A capital pledge was exacted from the members: that they read at least one organ devoted to the interests of Labor. Also, that their printing "shall always be given to firms paying not less than the standard rate of pay" and bearing the Union Label. (To be just to Boston, it maintained, not without lively discussion, the same practice.)

"Among the first problems to which Cail addressed its attention," writes Spencer Miller in the pamphlet already cited, "was the plight of women and children employed in the clothing sweatshops of New York City. Through the valiant effort of its members, it helped to eliminate many of these unhealthy conditions through the publication of 'White Lists' which contained the names of concerns that maintained fair work standards. Out of this early endeavor grew the Consumers League, which has served for nearly thirty years as the consumer's conscience in our land. Later, Cail became one of the effective agencies in securing the enactment of the Page Child Labor Law in New York State, one of the pioneer laws in the country for the abolition of child labor.

"Even in the most difficult of industrial problems—namely, strikes, Cail, through the good offices of Father Huntington and Bishop Potter, rendered great service as a mediator in industrial disputes. In one year alone, Bishop Potter mediated a half-dozen strikes; Father Huntington's record was no less distinguished."

Miss Keyser's optimism was in a measure justified by the very real influence Cail came to have in the Councils of the

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Church. It secured action at a Diocesan Convention that the Proceedings bear the Union Label. At the Triennial Convention of the whole Church "there was a strong deliverance in favor of a strict search by communicants of the causes of the increasing poverty among masses in this country." Cail was cited in evidence of a growing concern. The Association was closely localized in New York, though we do find Father Huntington organizing a branch in Chicago; but its influence was widely diffused. Almost every Bishop in the American Church and several in the British Provinces became, to Miss Keyser's glee, Honorary Vice-Presidents. But its most picturesque expression was in the services it held on Labor Sundays, when the trades union delegates, present in large numbers, learned something of the glory of Catholic worship, and of the strong support to their cause implicit in it.

One account of such a service, which filled Old Trinity to overflowing, is especially moving. The Knights of Labor must have felt that the ancient Church could excel all their own cryptic rites in symbolic pageantry. Up the long aisle marched the great processional choir, and midway among them floated a red flag; for in the hands of Catholic believers that flag is no symbol of destruction, but is fraught with inspiring reminder of Pentecost and, as one Church paper said, "with tender and ennobling associations, witnessing to the love of Him Who hath made of one blood all the nations on the earth."

"See the waving Standard borne  
By stalwart arms and courage good  
Red with all the lines of morn,  
The banner of man's brotherhood."

So sang the choir. It was a Negro who carried this banner; he was followed by a white man, carrying the American flag. After the flags came the vested clergy, and the procession

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closed with the officiant, the Rev. J. N. Steele of Trinity, "in a richly wrought cope, attended by two boys in cottas and red cassocks." The sermon was preached by the Rev. C. Adams of Buffalo, on the text: "I should utterly have fainted but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

The service had been held at St. George's the preceding year. But it was one year at Trinity that the great hymn of Selwyn Image, dear to the Christian Social Union in England, was sung. Echoes of that singing still vibrate in living hearts:

"Approach ye, approach ye, sons of men rejoicing,  
Brother by brother, march on with prayer and song,  
Cry unto Jesus, our Brother born to save us.  
O come, Son of Mary,  
Jesu our Redeemer,  
O come, King Triumphant, and reign on earth!"

"The earth is the Lord's, the nations are His children  
Yea, though their birthright they know not or deny,  
Rending asunder what God hath willed united.  
O come, Son of Mary,  
Jesu our Redeemer,  
O come, King Triumphant, and reign on earth."

"Witness O Church, with whom His promised Spirit  
Dwells through the ages, His ever-gracious will.  
Friend of the friendless, outcast, downtrodden,  
O come, Son of Mary,  
Jesu our Redeemer,  
O come, King Triumphant, and reign on earth."

"Who shall despair, though round us be confusion?  
Though not for us the perfect order dawn?  
The Day star is seen, the darkness is departing.  
O come, Son of Mary,  
Jesu our Redeemer,  
O come, King Triumphant, and reign on earth."

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“Then rise, Lord, we pray Thee, and heal the nation’s sickness;  
Rise, Thou, for whom amid the night we wait!  
Our eyes are dim with vigils, our hearts with hope are aching.

O come, Son of Mary,  
Jesu, our Redeemer,  
O come, King Triumphant, and reign on earth.”

No one who has heard that hymn sung to the “*Adeste Fideles*” will ever forget it.

## V

These rising tendencies within the Church met naturally with strong and alarmed opposition. Not only the “representatives of vested interests,” but many men disinterested and honorable, deprecated the entrance of the Church into politics. To try to relate politics and religion is indeed to embark on a stormy sea. Had not Father Huntington himself said, as early as 1887, that he found political activities interfering with his religious duties, and that he meant to withdraw from them? He had not withdrawn; no one interested in Single Tax or in the Organization of Labor could easily do so, but the point of view must have pressed itself upon him more and more sharply. The Single Tax movement itself had become a centre of dissension. The reform movement, according to a disconcerting habit such movements have, was breaking up into factions.

For instance: all honest liberals in New York were becoming seemingly united in protest against Tammany misrule. Under the auspices of the recently formed People’s Municipal League a big meeting was called in 1890. Those present included a long list of distinguished names: Ernest Crosby, Dr. De Costa, Henry van Dyke, Heber Newton, the Rev. (R. C.) Father Ducey, Morgan Dix—despite the fact that Father Huntington

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had joined in strong protests against the Trinity Church tenement scandal,—Theodore Williams, the Unitarian, and, of course, Bishop Potter. And the meeting almost went on the rocks. Father Huntington was to blame. To change the metaphor, he threw a firebrand into it by presenting a resolution that the movement demand that any candidate for mayor be endorsed by the Labor Unions. The resolution did not pass, and discussion was hot. It was a significant fight; it circled around the same difficulties as attempts at a United Front meet today.

Ties were put under great strain. For instance Dr. De Costa, who had presided at the first Cail meeting, who had criticized the Charity Organization Society much as Father Huntington had done, and who had been a long-tried friend, now took a path sharply divergent. Father Huntington might change his active policies; but he held consistently to his own views of the function and duty of the Church. A fine statement he made at about this time may be quoted; it presents an attitude in which he never wavered:

“A voluntary society might be excused; the Church is a society begun in the Eternal Will, by which, in Jesus Christ, the manhood, the vitality of humanity, was taken into God. Therefore the Church, His Body, stands in living relation with every individual, family, and nation, and declares with prophetic voice against all that dishonors humanity, whether individual, family, or nation.”

It is not difficult to see what his attitude would be today. And he might well rejoice in the ever-increasing strength of Christian opinion in full accord with him.

But that meeting of which we just spoke probably played its part in determining the withdrawal of Father Huntington from secular and political activity, which we shall soon have

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to chronicle; for the years 1886-1890 mark the zenith of his social activity.

He put himself clearly on record, however, before he turned aside from secular affairs. Unlike his father, he was not an author. His early tracts, "New Occasions Teach New Duties," "Tenement House Morality," etc., were quickening; his brief later devotional booklets issued from the Holy Cross press, mostly intimate notes from his Retreats and often written in collaboration, have beauty and helpfulness. Just because of their simplicity and informality, these little volumes possess value and quality of their own, and they have a not negligible contribution to make to comprehension of his mind, his methods, and his power as a spiritual guide. But they are devoid of literary pretensions. Once, however, we find him coöperating with kindred spirits in a more formal way. In 1893 a book was published showing the advance made, primarily by the social and college settlements which by that time had appeared, in deepening and liberating the social services and in lifting them to a higher level than that of old-fashioned charity. This book, *Philanthropy and Social Progress*, contained two essays by Father Huntington; the others were by men and women with whom one likes to find him associated: Jane Addams, Robert Woods, Franklin Giddings, and Bernard Bosanquet. "Philanthropy; its Success and Failure," "Philanthropy and Morality," are among the most revealing of his writings. Human, informed, looking back through a long perspective of social efforts and charities, born of intimate experience of mortal foibles, they are at once temperate and passionate. A repressed indignation is strong in them and also relief in the new atmosphere that settlements had begun to generate. The exposition of the shallowness of the morality underlying most benevolence is biting still. "What

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I ask now is whether the system [of organized charity] has not failed of its highest object.”<sup>1</sup> In a way these essays date; yet the passion for liberty that throbs in them is timeless, as is the demand for the freedom for the poor, without which none of us can be truly free. Both essays cut far below surface facts; a passage from the second essay presents the theme:

“When a fundamental social injustice has come to be recognized and admitted, any efforts toward correcting special evils, that do not contribute to the movement against the underlying wrong, tend to become nugatory and abortive.”<sup>2</sup>

Never were the cheap evasions of much current philanthropy more scathingly and effectively scored; rarely were the problems to be met by the worker for social salvation more honestly faced. The first essay ends as was natural with a constructive suggestion: a plea for Single Tax. The second, more impressively, alone among the essays in the volume, strikes the note of Catholic faith in its fullness as the only ultimate source of wisdom. And a passagé toward the end of this second essay presents with succinct eloquence the one program in which to this day Christians must all agree:

“We are so involved with others in our political and economic life that we cannot free ourselves from the shame of this injustice however we may see and detest it; we can only do our best to bring home the horror of it to other individuals, until the whole community is stung with the sense of its own misery, and, like Samson, breaks the bands that bind it down. That will not be a war of classes, but a struggle of the whole people to be free.”<sup>3</sup>

The Marxist Communist, bound in his own prison of

<sup>1</sup> *Philanthropy and Social Progress*. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., N. Y., 1893, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 202.

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economic determinism, turns aside from the idealistic hope with a sneer. Dares the Christian do so? In any case, here was the hope of Father Huntington, the noblest hope of the Nineties, and here is the best hope of the Christian even to our own day.



## CHAPTER IX

### *TRANSITION: WESTMINSTER DAYS*

#### I

FATHER HUNTINGTON never wavered in loyalty to the social causes he had espoused, nor in his deep and sad conviction concerning the shortcomings of the social witness of the Church. But the time came when he fell on silence. Radical platforms knew him no more; searchlights no longer played on his figure. Publicity seldom pursued him into the tranquil monastic seclusion whence he emerged in the main only for the normal priestly work of conducting Missions and Retreats within the orbit of the Anglican communion.

Reasons for the altered emphasis were compelling. Slowly he had come to realize that the central work to which he was committed, the upbuilding of a Religious Order in the United States, could never succeed under the conditions of his New York life. In the November number of the *Holy Cross Magazine* for 1934, the fiftieth anniversary of his profession, he quietly describes the consequent change: after stating that for ten years the two members of the projected community—himself and Sturges Allen—had carried on the work of the Holy Cross Mission, he goes on:

“We came gradually to understand something as to the attitude of mind of those among whom we labored. We knew how they ate (or starved), toiled, slept (often on the floor), sickened (tuberculosis was rife), and died. Yet I think that we never succeeded in realizing how they *Felt*,—what it

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must have meant, for instance, to grow up without having been out of the presence of other people.

"At the end of our first decade of life at the Mission, we still had only three members in the Order of the Holy Cross. There seemed to be no prospect that our number would increase unless we made a fresh beginning. . . . So we withdrew to a rented house on Pleasant Ave., near 125th Street, and after a year or so there we moved to Westminster, Maryland, where a new era was to be inaugurated, and a new wealth of Divine blessing was to be poured out on us."

The first of these moves, involving as it did surrender of parochial work in connection with Holy Cross Mission and the Sisters of St. John Baptist, must have been the result of a difficult decision; but it had become obvious that the Order, if it were to survive, must lead an independent life. Other reasons also were probably operative in this change; part of the money of the Sisterhood was derived from the rent of East Side dwellings; Father Huntington, still active in Single Tax agitation, was uneasy over the fact.

Far more momentous was the change which so soon followed: the transference of the headquarters of the Order to the country town of Westminster. Here indeed was a decision which must have cost him cruel heart-searchings. It meant abandonment of that direct fellowship with the poor which had been an authentic part of his vocation. But the Order had not grown. At first perhaps he had not minded much. His call had been intensely personal: "Here am I; send Me," had been as truly the answer of his heart as of Isaiah's. Yet even from the beginning, the longing for comrades had been strong. Father Henry R. Sargent, third member of the tiny nascent Order, describes his first meeting with Father Huntington in 1884: "He had made his Religious Profession that afternoon, and I found him alone in the Mission House in

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Avenue C. He seemed to be looking out on a possible future, but I felt that there was a kind of mental loneliness as he tried to express his hope." Peter's question, "Lord, what shall this man do?" was surely inspired less by curiosity than by desire for companionship; yet to every Christian soul comes the stern answer: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me."

But the monastic ideal could not find fulfilment in solitude. The very intensity of James Huntington's social feeling led him to recognize that there was laid on him the task of shaping a brotherhood. He writes: "What can we do? I expect to spend three days at St. Stephens College, Annandale, this Spring. That will give me one opening. But of course we don't want to tease or coax men." "The work I do in Missions and Retreats seems quite what our Order ought to do, only there ought to be many, and we don't seem to be doing anything to gather many."

There was deep disappointment. But the wind bloweth where it listeth; and many a man truly born of the Spirit, responding to the call to the monastic life, might not feel as James Huntington did that this life involved taking up his abode in the hurly-burly of a New York tenement quarter. Quite the contrary indeed. Was the young monk trying to reconcile two incompatible ideals? One who has never surrendered to either can hardly judge, but any practical person must be impressed by the difficulty involved in the mere management of time. When did he find opportunity for the long devotions, the offices, the hours of meditation, required by his Rule? Any poor layman decently wishing to say his prayers and neglecting them because dizzy with ceaseless pressure of Duty—that stern daughter either of the Voice of God, or as sometimes may be, of the clever tempter—must marvel at his achievement. True, one notes with a little awe that time seems to become elastic and almost to take on the attributes of

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eternity, now and then, to men living deeply in the spirit. But there are only twenty-four hours in the day, after all. If Father Huntington found it impossible to compass the whole of his comprehensive ideal, his case was not peculiar. Mary and Martha were sisters, but they evidently did not find it quite easy to live together. Again and again, the eager idealist has to curtail and simplify his aims. Great visions shine before him. His eyes embrace a whole mountain range tempting to high endeavor. Alas, he can scale only one peak at a time.

Father Hughson, writing also in *The Holy Cross Magazine*, for November 1934, gives the story of the move to Westminster with sanctified common sense:

“The Order of the Holy Cross spent the first twelve years of its existence in one of the most densely populated sections in the world,—the east side of New York city. . . . But more and more it was borne in upon it that God had given to this little group of men a call to do a wider work than any one such area could offer, and it was made abundantly clear by indications arising from many quarters that the vocation of the Order could be carried out only by the intensive development of the life of the group as a Religious foundation. It was manifestly impossible to achieve this amid the seething millions of a great city.

“When therefore in 1882 Miss Lucretia Van Bibber of blessed memory offered the Order a house at Westminster, Maryland, it was felt that it was a call from God to begin a new period in the development of the monastic life in the American Church. Holy Cross House, as we called it, was no great foundation. It was a simple cottage in a country town in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains. We came into residence in the late summer of 1892. It fell out by the providence of God that the first Mass said under this roof was on the Feast of St. Dominic, August 4. It seemed a happy omen.

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The work done by the great Dominican Order was not unlike that to which the Order of the Holy Cross, in its far humbler sphere, felt God was calling it."

Father Schlueter, whose heart strings are entwined with tender memories of Holy Cross Mission, nevertheless agrees with Father Hughson that however dearly Father Huntington loved it, the scope that the Mission afforded him was too narrow. With insight born of long intimacy, he points out the sacrifice involved for Father Huntington in the change. For in moving into a larger field, he relinquished, or to speak more accurately he expected to relinquish, the personal response afforded in mission work. "He seemed always to be offering up any joy that came to him from appreciation or affection," writes Father Schlueter. "So he threw himself into the larger sphere where there would be more giving, and less chance of receiving. I think that like St. Paul few men longed more for the good will of their fellows than he. I remember his telling me while still at Holy Cross he went on a trip abroad (or was this perhaps when they were at Pleasant Avenue?). At any rate when he returned, he saw everyone met by friends, but when he got on the wharf with his luggage, there was no one there to meet him. As he put it, 'I just wanted to sit down and boo hoo.' "

One smiles, recalling the throngs of devoted disciples who must have been an embarrassment at times in his later years. But the change in his life would have been a wrench to his ever living and outgoing affections; he would have left the city uproar for the country peace of Westminster with a sorrowful and disappointed heart.

Many others were disappointed, too; and the consciousness of the fact may have hurt a little. Bishop Potter, for instance, had based his willingness to endorse the Order of the Holy Cross on the unique service such an Order could render to

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the poor; for those were the years in which settlements and other agencies were beginning to realize that intimate helpfulness to people is impossible unless one shares their lot. Now, as one of the Bishop's biographers clearly hints, he was grieved at the change in the character of the Order and its abandonment of its original aims. His feeling was widely shared; for we have seen how largely hesitant approval of Father Huntington's profession was based on recognition of his social usefulness; while unsympathetic distrust of the deeper realities of his vocation had prevailed among all except the small Anglo-Catholic group. "In the years that have since passed," wrote Dean Hodges, a little sardonically, "The Order of the Holy Cross has proceeded in its mission without justifying either the fears of those who were alarmed by its appearance, or the hopes of those who found in it a new service of the poor."

Dean Hodges is doubtless right when he goes on to say that "the mission to working men was only an incidental or even accidental part of the purpose of Holy Cross." Nor does he exhaust that purpose even when he continues, giving tribute to its noble work in Missions and Retreats. It is hard for the American mind to escape the standards of Martha! But one of the sharpest tests of character on the higher levels is again and again the necessity of choice between equally noble but incompatible and often conflicting aims. The Christian faced by such dilemmas has one and one only recourse: appeal to the Enabling Light.

*Veni, Creator Spiritus.*

## II

From now on, the Order of the Holy Cross was destined to conform increasingly to the conventional monastic pattern;

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and again we remind ourselves that the revival of lost values is as sacrificial an adventure as exploration of new fields. But for Father Huntington, the change implied more than surrender of personal ministries. Another renunciation may well have cut even deeper. He dropped out almost completely from activity in social reform.

Such withdrawal need not necessarily have resulted from a move to the country. Causes can be served from anywhere. He had been initiated into life's concrete realities, and would never have become that dangerous person, a mere ideologist. But we have seen that for a long time, scruples about dividing his energies had beset him. Far back in 1887 he had written: "Taking part in politics interferes with my religious duties; and therefore I shall aid the cause in a quieter manner,"—a pious intention not immediately fulfilled. Early in 1890 he writes his father of a talk with a friend:

"He felt moved to urge me not to prejudice this higher work by an undue interest in social questions. . . . I told him that I felt just as he did, but that we did not see our way to make any special efforts toward gathering recruits, that we had given up our local work in order to devote ourselves untrammelled to the building up of a community life, but that two didn't make a community."

Now that "two" promised to be reinforced, the wracking problems involved in corporate responsibility began to press harder and harder upon him. The O.H.C. as it developed was united in bearing a Catholic witness within a Protestant world; to expect it to be united in highly controversial secular matters was impossible. Not all men ready to devote themselves to the revival of monasticism would naturally be votaries of organized labor or of Single Tax. As a matter of fact, they weren't. So, as Father Whittemore succinctly tells us:

"He eventually gave up his active work in promulgating

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the economic doctrines in which he believed, because, as he thought, other members of his Order did not see eye to eye with him. He felt that he should subordinate his own views and inclinations in such matters to the feeling of the group in which he had taken his monastic vows."

His final decision may be recorded in a note made by Father Sill of a conversation in the spring of 1896. Considering the share of his own father and also of Bishop Huntington in the establishment of Cail, the turn of the talk is not surprising:

"Father Founder and I had some talks around the nearby fields. I recall his explaining why he had ceased to be active in Single Tax affairs. He felt that in so small a community, and with himself as the representative of the Order in the outside work, it was not fair to the other men to become identified with any distinct economic problem." The brief sentence opens a vista of such disciplines as community life must always impose. Reconciliation of personal choices with corporate activity is no easy matter for a sensitive conscience; fear of personal dishonesty or cowardice conflicting with fear of disloyalty to the general will spreads pitfalls on either side, as many a college professor knows. Dignity and reserve have always marked the self-expression of the O.H.C. But tensions were inevitable, and who can doubt that sadness and inward struggle were often the part of the Father Founder? The only man who can know peace within is he who plays a lone hand. Any group life, however unified, however consecrate, is an arena of conflict. Its unity is attained at cost of constant adjustment and compromise; and unusual even in the higher ranges of fellowship is the situation where such adjustments put a strain only on preferences and not on conscience.

What sorrow his renunciation of social activity caused Father Huntington, is matter of surmise. But from now on,

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we must note reverently, a change in emphasis. The vibrant joy in adventure, the vigorous initiative, the delighted zest in what were to him the wars of the Lord, fade away. They are replaced by an almost awe-inspiring humility, by grave patience, by gentleness ever more perfected. Self vanishes, as it were, from even the inmost citadel of purpose and desire. What we watch is, in effect, a very wonderful thing. It is a steady advance, carried on through many years, in that highest science of mystical "Naughting" which is the same as sanctity. Naked he followed the naked Cross.

Reticent, as all fine natures are, concerning life's seeming betrayals, he did on rare occasions speak of his great sorrow. He had hoped, he once told a younger seeker, that an Order might grow up around him, of men united in advanced social action as well as in religious disciplines: pioneers, moving toward a new world day. "But such was not God's Will," said he.

Let it not be supposed that he had himself altered one jot in personal convictions. His unswerving allegiance to his old social creed appears again and again, as all who knew him in his later years can testify. Nor did he fail to bear witness when wise occasion arose. Thus, on June 25, 1902, he wrote to Mr. Alexander Greene of Chicago:

My dear Brother: Thank you for your very interesting communication. The conviction of fourteen years remains unchanged in my mind, that the Single Tax on Land values is the just mode of collecting funds for the needs of the community, local or general, and that its application would go far to remove unjust social distinctions and vastly increase the range of individual initiative by opening natural opportunities to all. In the Single Tax I see the only preservative from some form, more or less specious, of State Socialism.

Believing this, I am heartily in sympathy with the proposed movement in Colorado, as a first step towards giving us a prac-

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tical working illustration of the Single Tax. It will be to the lasting honor of that noble state if she points the way for us toward a true democracy and the development of the spirit of a free country.

Very sincerely yours,

J. O. S. Huntington, Superior O.H.C.

Mr. Greene adds: "The above is a copy of a letter written at my request, to be used in a campaign in the state of Colorado, for an amendment to the state constitution for a small tax on land values; that is for a small measure of Henry George's theory of the Single Tax."

It may be noted that Father Huntington signed the letter as Superior. This was a position which he by no means always held; there were long periods when he was relieved from its responsibilities. To be exact, he was Superior from 1884 to 1888, from 1897 to 1907, from 1915 to 1918, from 1921 to 1924. The suggestion has been made that he claimed larger freedom when in this position, than during the sundry periods when he was under obedience to others. To verify the suggestion would be difficult and ungrateful; in any case he would rejoice in the vitality, even to the present day, of the Single Tax movement so dear to him. But with rare exceptions, such as the above, his active service to the cause was over.

Times changed, for that matter. The prescient quality in Father Huntington's social thinking is shown in the fact that the movements he served and sponsored are living to this day. But the leaders vanished, one by one, and with their passing the character of the movements altered. Henry George died in 1897, and the Single Tax agitation, though persistent, proceeded less dramatically. The romantic and rather vague idealism of the Knights of Labor with its inclusive vision, sweeping to far horizons, of human solidarity, was replaced

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by cooler, more restricted aims and methods, yielding to the business efficiency of the A. F. of L. Samuel Gompers succeeded Powderly as central figure in the Labor Movement. May it be permitted to wonder what Father Huntington in Paradise thinks of C.I.O.?

The Fathers of O.H.C. may not have seen eye to eye in secular matters, but they were ardently united in espousing a life rooted in deep convictions that rise from a recovered Catholic heritage; and the monastery, visible centre of that life, became not only a refuge to the soul and a haven of peace, but also a training school and a dynamic focus of outgoing spiritual power. Thankfully, James Huntington must have watched the flowering of his ideal, and earnestly he surrendered himself wholly to serving what was the chief objective of his life: the development of the Order he had founded.

### III

The sons of St. Francis had in their first zeal settled habitually in the most malodorous and unpleasant surroundings they could find. But even they outgrew the habit, and as for orthodox monks, their exquisite taste in locations, patent to any visitor in Europe, dispels any idea of deficient sense of beauty in the Middle Ages. Father Huntington sometimes strongly reminds us of St. Francis; but his Order was always kin to the monks rather than to the friars.

We owe to Father Hughson a charming account of life at Westminster: "I would venture to suggest that no town in the United States was to be found which so recalled the conditions common in ancient European seats. The town was small; there was one long street, the houses in most cases abutting immediately on the pavement with gardens behind. . . . Beyond lay the great stretches of farm lands. . . . Around

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the four sides of the square were built houses so disposed as to give a mediaeval flavor in our Western world. Here the little community—if community it could be called, two professed members and one novice—took up its abode.” Perhaps it was lucky that the group was small, for the house, adjoining the parish Church, was small, too: nine rooms, and a big attic, later cut up into cubicles for the novices, of whom Father Hughson became one. There were many compensations in the small compass of one’s quarters. “Sweeping and dusting were reduced to a minimum . . . and the place was clean, you may be sure. We had a novice master on whom we used to practise the virtue of Christian charity.”

There was no luxury at Westminster; nor was there even comfort. The little house had been built for summer life, and icy winds from the Maryland uplands would creep into all the crevices in winter. “Getting up at five in the morning, and breaking your way through the ice to get a bath, made living a bit austere.” An English visitor, appalled at zero weather, still recalls how his medicine froze and split its bottle, and cheery neighborhood memories recount how the shivering young Fathers used to run away now and then to the warm shelter of the Rectory. But something better than comfort was known. Many a detail may still be gleaned of those days fifty years ago. How little boys (one now a revered College professor), had the time of their lives in week-end visits; how all the neighbors, including congregations in Baltimore, were thrilled by the sermons of Father Sargent, the third professed member, who had come to the Order while it was still in Pleasant Street; how the young Fathers endeared themselves to the town. Fun abounds in the recollection; we learn, for instance, of a great catastrophe; for the cherished community cow got into the bran barrel, ate her way through, and died. . . . The episode recalls a similar one years later at

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Adelynrood, where a Retreat was progressing, and Mrs. John Glenn and the poet and novelist Florence Converse perceived through the window that a cow was in the corn. Silently they sallied forth, silently, with breathless zeal, chased Bossy away; and still in complete silence, not having said a word to each other, returned to Chapel. . . . Father Huntington may well have been the conductor at this Retreat; he was often at Adelynrood.

Further to quote Father Hughson about this idyllic period is irresistible: "No one who lived at the Westminster house a generation ago will ever forget the all-day hikes among the high folds of the glorious Maryland hills, through the vistas of which shone the gleaming peaks of the Blue Ridge. . . . We took our lunch with us of course, and ate it, as we lay reclining along the bank of some little river in the woods, and as we rested after our refection we would read aloud. . . . So the day drifted by, full of loving fellowship and congenial conversation. On these junkets, of which there were always two or three in summer, we carried the life of the monastery Chapel with us. Offices were sung at the proper hours in deep woodland dells. . . . Passers-by sometimes wondered at the strange melodies which came to them from the deep of the woods or dropped from the heights of some adjacent hill. Had our Maryland neighbors been endowed with a little more wholesome poetical superstition than usually flourishes in this age, who can tell what strange legends might have grown up in the countryside?

"The unique thing about the house at Westminster was the life within its walls. Religion there was indeed 'right well kept.' Since those days I have visited not a few of the great monasteries of the Christian world, and I do not hesitate to say that nowhere have I ever found a stronger current of monastic devotion than that which was kept in steady flow by the little

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group of consecrated men who were making the first beginnings in this obscure establishment."

Father Hughson's tone of lingering affection for those "romantic days," as Father Sill wistfully calls them, is echoed by the third member of the Order, Father Sargent; and his evidence is the more impressive because the time was to come when he would find in the Roman Catholic Church the only communion in which he could believe the monastic ideal to be truly at home. But generously he writes: "With the removal to Westminster and later to the Hudson River, there was a conscious growth in the apprehension of rule and obedience. So far as I can apply the word to a community outside the Catholic Church, Holy Cross became monastic in spirit. I have always said of the members that they were truly obedient to what they believed to be the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and loyal to authority." . . . "There in the quietness and aloofness of a small town, the atmosphere of the house was that of a religious community."

Father Sargent was doubtless the novice master spoken of above, on whom Father Hughson and others used "to practise the virtue of Christian charity." He writes: "Probably we were over-strict, and believed we must bend Aristotle's stick the other way, in order to emphasize a feature of uncomonness in Anglicanism,—the technical 'Religious life.' It was this which helped, in the beginning at Westminster of our first real novitiate, with its proper usages and separateness. As Novice Master I had for use the entire top floor, where the novices found, and must find themselves, at home. The work was: Offices, our Opus Dei; reception of guests; studies; and manual labor."

Slowly but surely the tiny community grew. Still in 1897 there were only the three professed members. Then, suddenly, within little more than six months, the size was

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doubled. Father Sill and Father Hughson both entered the novitiate in 1900 and were professed in 1902. All through the Westminster years, went on the sweet ministry of hospitality which marks Holy Cross to this day; and already even with their limited numbers, had started that wide service of the Church through Missions and Retreats which had so effectively justified Bishop Huntington's contention of the acute need for agencies to supplement our parochial machinery and to meet with more flexibility the needs of souls.

### IV

By the end of these years, the O.H.C., still tiny in numbers, was a recognized power within the Anglican Church, and its members, especially Fathers Huntington and Sargent, were more and more called on for leadership in missions and Retreats.

But it did not pursue its course unchallenged, and all was not idyllic peace at Westminster. The little community had been glad to go there, partly because they were situated in a Catholic parish. During forty years, the Church of the Ascension in that town had been served by adherents of the Anglo-Catholic movement in America. Bishop Grafton and Father Prescott, two among the four first members of S.S.J.E., had been connected with it. Father Elbert Taylor, long secretary of the Confraternity of the Christian Life, was the incumbent when the Holy Cross Fathers went there. Peace, therefore, prevailed in their immediate surroundings; but that was more than could be said of the diocese. Bishop Paret of Maryland belonged to the same school as Bishop Lee, who had so vigorously protested against the action of Bishop Potter in receiving Father Huntington's vows, and the presence of this Pre-Reformation group, so to speak, in his own pre-

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incts evidently caused him extreme distress. People remembering those days are keenly aware how painful and exciting was the situation. Bishop Paret was unwilling to act as Visitor except under conditions which the community could not accept; he wished to dictate the Rule and the private practices of the House, and he would neither receive the Fathers as members of his diocese, nor countenance their ministering in Maryland outside of their own precincts. Under difficult circumstances sometimes, he saw to it that they conformed to his wish.

It was an unhappy conflict, one, alas, too common in those days and not without softened parallels in our own. "Altars without legs" are, it may be hoped, no longer an offense; yet one recalls, not so many years ago, bitter opposition in Trinity Church, Boston, to a cross on the Communion table. Such questions as Fasting Communion, Reservation, or even the avowed use of Confession, were intensely controversial. It might be supposed that details of ritual observance would be immaterial to Father Huntington, impassioned as he was for the larger issues of social justice. Such supposition would be erroneous. From the beginning of his life in Religion, he gave his most anxious and earnest attention to every ritual detail. In his outside ministry, his elastic sympathies, his tact, his common sense, all helped to determine his practice; it was his custom and that which he enjoined on his community to conform to the usages of the group or parish in which they found themselves: sometimes sharp clashes would result between him and rigorists among the younger men. But his profound devotion to the Sacramental life of the Church expressed itself at Holy Cross in reverential and anxious care for every liturgical or ritual point.

A letter to Bishop Potter on the occasion of the consecra-

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tion of the Church of the Holy Cross on Avenue C shows his careful discrimination. It concerns chiefly the much mooted question of Confession; as endorsed by the Anglican communion:

“We can not but feel that Confession, *Not* in the sense of an obligation upon all but of a privilege extended to those who feel a need of it, must be a fixed and definite feature of our mission work. But while saying this we wish to disclaim the use of *Direction*, in the technical sense of the word. The laying upon the conscience of a penitent of commands which are not an expression of the revealed Will of God, or even the enforcement of the dictates of the penitent’s own conscience, but which rest simply on the authority of the priest,—*This* seems to us fraught with danger, to both priest and penitent, and to be the source of many of the worst evils connected with confession in the past.”

Such was his temperate, reasoned, and—as Father Sargent in another connection remarks—entirely non-Roman attitude. But within his own monastery, the full language of Catholic symbolism in all its unique beauty and significance as well as the full disciplines approved by Catholic tradition, should have the right of way. It was an uneasy situation at Westminster.

Meanwhile, through the Anglican Church at large, the deeply human and direct appeal of Catholic practice was increasing and winning those meant for it to joyous allegiance. Not the least agency in this slow and healthful transformation was the Order of the Holy Cross, under the leadership of the Father Founder. It was gradually becoming clear that confluent streams from Catholic and Protestant tradition would continue to flow, bringing refreshment, into the never very tranquil, but always very much alive Anglican communion, and that neither would consent to course under-

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ground to oblige the other. May it not be the glory of that communion that she has received in unusual degree the Pentecostal Gift of speaking with diverse tongues, as the Spirit gives her utterance?

So far as the laity were concerned, controversy concerning the Order of the Holy Cross had quieted down. It had approved itself too widely through devoted ministrations to spiritual needs. It had found its distinctive function in the Church. Meanwhile, grave divergences as to both methods and attitudes were of course not unknown within it. Incertitudes abounded as in all growing life.

Father Sargent, for instance, reports sharp differences as to the construction placed on the duties of Superior: an office which he held himself during the last years at Westminster. When he ceased to hold it, he said, as he tells us, to Father Huntington: "Perhaps I had failed in my direction of affairs, and perhaps in not ordering the life sufficiently. He said, 'System! Why you systematized us to the highest degree. We had enough, be sure.' He was quite right," comments Father Sargent: "I was too young and too certain that I knew all that my office required." In spite of the frank humility of this avowal, one is aware of a real difference of emphasis in the two minds. There is an undertone of loving criticism in Father Sargent's further analysis. He speaks of Father Huntington's rare unselfishness: "This, and the sense of obligation to the Famiglia of Holy Cross helped in the habit of giving out. Indeed, Father Huntington seems to me to have been in this feature of his life a kind of paragon for his associates." But he continues in a tender spirit to indicate what was to him the Father Founder's chief weakness: "It was a form of timidity, and of disinclination to take a bold stand on one's convictions. . . . He had also a habit of experimentation, but I am sure prayed before he acted. It was a native trait in him to

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take up something new, and then to drop it as useless." Henry George would have been surprised to hear James Huntington accused of timidity! But that quality can manifest itself in diverse spheres.

Yet how clearly comes out in this comment the contrast in temperament and in approach to truth of these two devoted men! In Father Sargent, speaks the predestined Roman. Now Father Huntington, though he practised reserves, never hesitated on due occasions in expressing his convictions; but in handling men, his very reverence for other personalities may well have been responsible for what seemed weakness to his friend. Perhaps it was never easy for him to exert authority. The distinction of attitudes cuts deep. To consider it would lead into bewildering efforts to define authority, obedience, freedom. Not for us at this point to enter the confused maze through which honest men in secular affairs as in religion seek to thread their way. But cannot Father Huntington himself help us to see by what path he sought to lead the community he had gathered around him? Yes! We have the guide he offered, and it is precious.





## CHAPTER X

### *THE RULE OF THE ORDER. I*

#### I

DURING the Westminster years, Father Huntington gave his brothers their formal marching orders: that written Rule which they cherish as their dearest possession. The older Fathers tell how he returned from absence on a Mission, to seclude himself for a month's virtual Retreat, emerging with the Rule practically in the form it has now. Even to the outsider, it is a singularly searching and moving document. Father Huntington told one of the Fathers that it was originally twice its present size, and it gains by its conciseness. "In it," says Father Whittemore, "the Father Founder moves surely and without hesitation through the most intricate processes of the spiritual life." In austere completeness of assumed vocation, in flexibility and freedom of spirit, it recalls the First Rule of St. Francis; dealing less with specific directions, though such are present, than with exposition of an underlying and pervasive ideal. Inevitably built up around those three Counsels of Perfection which guide monastic life in all phases and ages, it has an original method, carefully thought out, based on a conception of Christian motivation and conduct on the highest levels.

Much discussion has obtained in the Order as to its own closest affiliations. Not Franciscan of course; the sons of Francis were properly not monks but friars. St. Francis, moreover, envisaged a lay rather than a clerical movement; he dis-

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trusted learning, and even in his later Rules emphasis fell on a way of life rather than on definite routine, so that the "*Libertà Francescana*" was a scandal to some, and inspiration to others. The Rule of the O.H.C. suggests rather that glory of the mediaeval Church, the great Rule of St. Benedict. In the chaotic decadence of the Roman Empire, Benedict had felt the need of placing his spiritual sons under strict discipline of ordered hours and regulated pursuits. Perhaps Father Huntington thought that the nineteenth century was as chaotic as the sixth and stood in as much need of careful regulation. The Order considers, however, that it is nearest of all to the Augustinian tradition, for its members, like secular Augustinian priests, are free to undertake such work as parochial cures, or schools, apart from their own centres, while Benedictine activities are rigidly confined within their own monastic borders. St. Augustine of Hippo is venerated as the principal patron of the Order.

Father Huntington, in any case, followed accredited monastic tradition in prescribing a fixed routine for the monastery of Holy Cross. We have seen from Father Hughson's memories how closely this was observed at Westminster. Mass, of course, every morning; daily, the Seven Day Hours, an hour of meditation, two visits to the Blessed Sacrament, half an hour of spiritual reading; twice a day, an examination of conscience, with additional devotions too many to enumerate for special seasons. Thus the "*Opus Dei*" gravely governed all; and be it realized, if the routine seem taxing, how large a proportion of the time of ordinary mortals is consumed in our habitual stream of gentle chatter. At Holy Cross, silence prevailed. The Great Silence, from Compline till after breakfast. Silence with certain exceptions for three hours every morning, and during the free time every afternoon. At meals, again with exceptions; and in all parts of the house,

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aside from the common rooms and offices. Requirements when Fathers were away from home were more flexible; but assuredly no member of Holy Cross could ignore the admonition: "We are always to remember that though our vocation as an Order is to the Mixed Life, active and contemplative, yet the contemplative is that which alone can vivify and supernaturalize the natural."

"Supernaturalize!" There, in a word, was the pivot of the Rule. Today, not only humanists, but some nominally Christian leaders shrink from affirming the supernatural. One or two, possessing strong appeal for youth, boldly demand that religion shake off the term as an outworn garment. Much depends on the definition of Supernatural. The term did not mean to Father Huntington, as to those who disavow it, contradiction or interruption of natural law, or repudiation of a Divine Immanence. Natural law it transcended rather than denied; the Divine Immanence it included. The point in his ordering of life for his spiritual sons, was the assumption that ultimate reality exists only on a plane above "Nature," wherein consciously to abide is the aim of the Religious vocation.

He continues his thought on the contemplative life, in a passage of exalted emotion, lifting our hearts above routine into the sanctuary where his spirit lived: "Nor are we to think that a life of contemplation is one of calm retirement. . . . There can be no clearer knowledge of God without greater purity of heart; there will be no purification without pain, no rapture without desolation, no Tabor without Calvary. We must therefore have recourse to the Standard set before us in our dedication, and we must look up to the Cross as witnessing to the struggle with the power of darkness, to the suffering whereby we are freed from sin, to the triumph already won by our victorious Head. We must rejoice in the Holy Cross as the glory of the Christian name, and we are to find in the

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contemplative life, cleaving with adoring love to God in the midst of satanic assaults and the weariness of aridity and apparent failure, the essential characteristic of our life as Christians, as priests, and as Religious."

Here is the sharp accent of authentic experience. Chronicling Father Huntington's multiform activities, one may be sometimes tempted to think of him as an Extrovert; for there may be noted in him an habitual reticence, the antipodes of facile emotional expansiveness, in regard to the mysterious life of the soul. *Secretum meum mibi!* But in a passage like the foregoing, he reveals himself comrade and compeer of the great Christian mystics of all ages. "The weariness of aridity and apparent failure,"—which of them has not recorded it? "The true purgative aridity is accompanied in general by a painful anxiety," says St. John of the Cross. . . . "The cause of this dryness is that God is transferring to the spirit the goods and energies of the senses, which, having no natural fitness for them, become dry, parched up, and empty. . . . The first action of material fire on fuel is to dry it, to expel from it all water and all moisture. It blackens it at once and soils it, producing a disagreeable smell, and drying it by little and little, makes it light and consumes all its foulness and blackness, which are contrary to itself. Finally, having heated and set on fire its outward surface, it transforms the whole into itself, and makes beautiful as itself."

And again he says: "The soul must enter the second night of the spirit, where—perfectly detaching sense and spirit from all sweetness and all imaginations—it will travel on the road of faith dark and pure."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Forever Thy servants take refuge in faith, hiding under the wings of the Cross."

Father Huntington was the man described in a pregnant

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phrase of *The Cloud of Unknowing*; who “doth that in him is, to enable him to contemplative living by the virtuous means of active living.”

## II

The Rule is treated under three main Heads: Prayer, Mortification, and Good Works; these are related in turn to one of the Counsels of Perfection, Obedience, Chastity, Poverty. Here is a reversal of the usual order, probably suggested by the Lucan sequence of the Beatitudes: Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. But Father Huntington follows the order of St. Benedict and St. Francis, which both give Obedience the lead. “The rule and life of these brothers is this,” says St. Francis: “namely, to live in obedience and chastity, and without property.” “Listen, my son, and turn the ear of thine heart to the precepts of the Master,” is the preamble of St. Benedict: “Receive readily and faithfully carry out the advice of a loving Father, so that by the work of obedience you may return unto Him whom you have left by the sloth of disobedience. For thee, therefore, whosoever thou be, my words are intended, who, giving up thy own will, dost take the all powerful and excellent arms of obedience, to fight under the Lord Christ, the true King.” Thus the great spiritual leaders agree that, as Father Huntington puts it in his Rule, “The vow of obedience is the portal of the Religious state.”

During the formative years and flourishing prime of monasticism, such was the natural order. Obedience was the transference to the religious sphere of the basic attitude, whether in the dying epoch of Roman imperialism, or in the feudal system that succeeded. There was thus no disharmony between the secular and the religious ideal. But obedience is not a popular virtue in democratic America; quite often, during the birth-

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pangs of democracy there and elsewhere,—a travail not yet accomplished,—it has appeared in the light of a vice, being confused with cowardice, indolence, conformity. We perceive the difficulty with which it grows on American soil, whether we listen to the indignant outcry against check on private enterprise by the extension of social control, or watch the insolent and naive insistence of young people on having their own way, in the sacred name of freedom, and “self-expression.” Nor is it easy, as we have already hinted, to predict the outcome of the persistent and increasingly acute struggle of the philosophic mind to delimit the spheres of authority and freedom, in the politico-social area. As to religion, authority is probably more unpopular there than anywhere else.

Father Huntington's treatment in the Rule vibrates with actuality; and again he draws on deep sources of mystical wisdom. He allows no evasion. The Religious State “is constituted by a covenant wherein the soul gives itself, all its powers and faculties, together with the body and all material possessions, to God, through a Religious community, as represented by its Superior. From this it follows that Obedience is the chief among the three vows, since by obedience man offers to God the intellect, the will, the whole being, as not only a sacrifice but a holocaust. Hence St. Augustine calls obedience ‘not only the greatest of all virtues, but the source and mother of all virtues.’”

It is pointed out that the vow of obedience, like other religious vows, can only be fulfilled by the virtues; and again we rise to the supernatural level. “A virtue is a supernatural gift of God. The virtue of obedience means no mere outward conformity with external requirements made by man, but the glad response of filial love to the Voice of God. . . . ‘Christ became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.’ This is the measure of our obedience. We obey, not that we may live

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more peacefully, but that we may die more perfectly. The peace will come only when the sharpness of self-annihilation has been felt, when, through death itself, we have entered into the liberty of the sons of God, and can say, 'I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'

"The opportunity for this surrender is afforded in our community life. We are to die to our isolation and separateness as individuals, that we may live in the energies of a mystical body, wherein the life is one, and that the life of Jesus our Head. The Community is thus our means of entrance into union with our Ascended Lord.

"We must learn to make this immolation of self complete. It must extend to our judgment, and the estimates we form of the commands that proceed from any one who may have authority over us. It is not necessary that we should consider such a one infallible; it would not be well that we should obey him from mere natural affection or admiration; but we must hear the Voice of God calling us through Him. . . . We cannot rest in God while we are doing our own will even if what we seek be something which, considered in itself, is better than what we are bidden to do. We are to cultivate a sense of the limitation of our knowledge of even outward matters, and treasure up instances in which our assured judgment has proved wrong. This will aid our weakness in doing what seems to us mistaken, so long as it is not manifestly sinful.

"In our Rule, we connect the vow of obedience with the work of prayer. . . . And it is in the life of prayer that we can obey even unto that mystical death, when the soul becomes blind and dumb and motionless, having no longer any power of self-determination, accepting all things in holy indifference, and moved hither and thither, passive and unresisting, and yet in that very blindness attaining to the vision of God, and living in Him forever.

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“But the test of our progress in that blessed detachment will be the alacrity and spontaneity wherewith we carry out another’s wishes as though they were our own.”

It has seemed right to quote almost entire this grave and noble section of the Rule. Comment on such words seems impertinence; yet musing on them, we perceive three several and separate strands.

There is first the universal mystical approach to the *arcana*; the ideal is that common to every Christian man and woman, seeking to present his soul and body as a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice. Perhaps it is well to pause here, and realize the united witness of all deeply Christian thought. There are passages from a recent lecture on “Holy Obedience”<sup>1</sup> by a Friend, Thomas R. Kelly, which sound like an echo of the words just cited:

“It is this astonishing life . . . which intends complete obedience without any reservations that I would propose to you in all humility, in all boldness, in all seriousness. . . . If you don’t realize the revolutionary explosiveness of this proposal you don’t understand what I mean. . . . There is a degree of holy and complete obedience and of sensitive listening that is breathtaking. . . . It is an overwhelming experience to fall into the hands of the Living God, to be invaded to the depths of one’s being by His Presence, to be without warning wholly uprooted from all earth-born securities and assurances, and to be blown by a tempest of unbelievable power which leaves one’s old proud self utterly defenseless until one cries, ‘All Thy waves and Thy billows have gone over me.’ . . . Self is emptied into God, and God infills it. And we say with a writer of Psalms, ‘Lo, I come; in the book of the law it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God!’ and holy obedience sets

<sup>1</sup> “Holy Obedience.” William Penn Lecture, 1939. Thomas R. Kelly—Religious Society of Friends, 302 Arch St., Philadelphia, p. 4.

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in, sensitive as a shadow, obedient as a shadow, selfless as a shadow. Gladly, urgently, promptly, one leaps to do His bidding, ready to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint."

Evelyn Underhill<sup>1</sup> speaks in a language more native, perhaps, to Anglicans and closer to the theme of Father Huntington:

"The total offering up of the natural that it may become the vehicle of the Supernatural, in which the life of the Praying Church consists, reaches its apex in the three vows of the Religious Life. Here, all is stripped off but the bare donation of the self to God. Nor should we regard men and women called to this supreme vocation merely, or even chiefly, in their individual aspect. It is true that each is a victim of love, offered and accepted as a 'whole burnt offering a total gift.' " This is Father Huntington's Holocaust. "But each is also a living symbol, a token sacrifice, in which under the sanction of the Cross the Church again and again sums up and discloses the true nature of her deep interior life: the poverty of spirit, the chastity of heart, the obedience of will, which are the marks of an entire self-abandonment, and therefore the conditions of her supernatural power."

So far, Father Huntington has merely added his precious witness to a witness recurrent down the ages. No man save One has ever achieved the ideal; every one born of the Spirit aims at it forever. "Naked, to embrace the naked Cross," "Naughting," "Nichilitade"; the thought rings down the centuries. "He who loseth his life"—and he alone—"shall find it." No Buddhist self-annihilation is here; through obedience perfected, the lost life shall be found. Others beside monks and nuns have known the awesome experience of which Father

<sup>1</sup> Evelyn Underhill. *The Mystery of Sacrifice*. Longmans, Green & Co., N. Y., 1938, p. 25.

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Whittemore writes with burning conviction: "The Religious who tries to give himself wholeheartedly under Obedience, after going through a period when he seems to lose (and perhaps does lose) all power of initiative and to become a 'doormat,' goes on to a resurgence of his faculties wherein they are, so to speak, mystically renewed a hundredfold." So far, the general summons; and echoes of abiding truth ring in compelling beauty through Father Huntington's words.

### III

Next, is the second strand in this teaching; that in which the social note sounds clear. This note is implicit only in our Quaker pamphlet, with its searching individualistic emphasis. Yet at the end, it sounds surprisingly, and as it were surprised, in what would seem to many in the audience of the lecturer a new summons:

"Some of us will have to enter upon a vow of renunciation and of dedication to the 'Eternal Internal' which is as complete and as irrevocable as was the vow of the monk in the middle ages. Little groups of such utterly dedicated souls knowing one another in Divine Fellowship, must take an irrevocable vow to live in this world yet not of this world . . . and if it be His will kindle again the embers of faith in the midst of a secular world."<sup>1</sup>

Not only among the Friends, but here, there, everywhere, sounds a summons to form such "cells," to use the modern catchword; and here and there, in Japan, in England, in America, some actually, movingly, spring into being. (Note the *Ito En* in Japan; note Muriel Lester's former Brethren of the Common Table). Who can learn of them without emotion?

Father Huntington knew such a group; his own Order. No

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

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sudden sporadic phenomenon, but deep-rooted offspring of a tradition glorious, organic, continuous down the ages. And never in the most exalted passages of his Rule is the sense of Community absent. With keen wisdom he presents what the attitude commended should mean concretely on the human and social plane; with startling insight he translates abstract virtue into details of daily conduct, suggests the difficult application to community life. And here, we listen not only to the voice of religious leaders from the beginning, but to that of James Huntington, nurtured in democracy, Founder of the Order of the Holy Cross. "The community is thus our means of entrance into union with our Ascended Lord." The pregnant phrase gives the clue to the ordering of corporate life, not only in a Religious Order but in any social group. For here, striking at the root of all false individualism, is the full Catholic ideal, which no hermit running away into desert solitude could ever realize. Abundant chance for self-examination is afforded by that brief paragraph, with its rare recognition of the nature and difficulties of communal living. Penetrating the analysis, relentless the proffered technique! As we ponder the sentences, we perceive that the disciplines in humility, flexibility, self-subordination to the limit, afforded by group life, are for a democracy the only sure defender and preserver of its vaunted liberties. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." How pertinent is the principle to any sound functioning of group activity! It is as important to practise this difficult art of self-subordination in a town meeting as in a monastery. In such eager and courteous subordination of one's own taste or judgment, in acceptance of another's will, whether approved or not, is the one corrective for sullen acquiescence, latent or violent rebellion, devastating inner rage or frustrated will to power. Here is salvation from chaotic factionalism. Democracy if it is to function at all rightly,

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calls for continuous exercise, possibly in sublimated form, of this virtue of glad, spontaneous, chosen obedience, in which freedom is found in the sacrifice of freedom, and life, once more, is lost that it may be found.

But the Rule goes on:

“Through a religious community as *Represented by Its Superior.*” Here is the third point in Father Huntington’s analysis of the “Religious” life. And here we pause. . . . Does he take a leap in the dark, some will ask, when he associates perfected obedience with submission to the authority of a single man, be he Superior of an Order, President, Dictator, what you will? Is such a concept for democracy?

Visions of the Totalitarian State, of Imperialisms old and new, rise before one; have we here a survival from older cultures, Roman or mediaeval, of a principle essentially and forever true, but demanding new methods and applications? Obedience presupposes authority; but is not the seat of authority as debatable in a religious community as anywhere else? Some will say that Father Huntington’s application of his principle leads straight toward the relentless logic of Rome.

We are not called on to pursue such challenging questions. Whenever one seeks to climb to the higher levels of Christian experience, one finds oneself at cross-roads. For the clever Adversary spreads pitfalls in every path. We all recognize the need for absolute submission of the personal will to the Divine Guide. But shall that Guidance be direct? Or mediated through some human authority? There are humble saints, not all of them Quakers, who trust “The Inward Light” alone. In the area of Christian Churches, the principle of mediated authority always obtains,—but what is the medium? Within the large Catholic thought and practice of Obedience, and within religious bodies, two concepts will always conflict—that of St. Ignatius Loyola and that of St. Francis of Assisi. Great dangers

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inhere in the first; for the leader, the temptation to the arbitrary use of power, for the follower, the uncritical will to submit. The latter has not always a holy source; if submission may quell rebellion in act or thought it may also spring from cowardly craving to evade responsibility. The vow, as Father Huntington reminds us, can only be fulfilled by the virtue.

All Catholics are authoritarian; to both Romans and Anglicans, the intolerable burden of unlimited duty of private judgment is lightened and relieved by stress on holy obedience. But Roman and Anglican concepts of the seat of authority are not the same. To the Roman, it is focused in the Papacy; to the other, it is found in the consensus of Christian racial experience turned Godward and conveyed to us through the great Creeds and through the Liturgy. In life by either concept, the docile believer finds corrective for spiritual pride. There is always tension between them, and the Order of the Holy Cross would not have been made up of human beings if that tension had not been sharp at times.

We recognize with reverent admiration the compelling force of the vow to obedience in the life of Father Huntington himself. He was called as we know to apply it in two ways, now as Superior, now as a simple member; and when in the second position, it is touching to note the eager and at times almost self-conscious fervor of his application. We recall that when first he tried to explain his proposed Rule to a loving relative, it was on the vow to obedience that his emphasis fell. Probably, though there is some testimony on the other side, he was happier when obeying than when commanding. An early episode of the days of the Holy Cross Mission in New York illustrates what were perhaps his more youthful ideas. Father Allen having just been professed, Father Huntington became a Superior for the first time. "I wanted to know," says the reporter, "what it meant to be Superior of an Order. What

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was his authority? The Father described it, and of course left out nothing. It seemed as if all he had to do was to say to Father Allen, 'Heads off!' and his head would roll in the dust. When he was through and saw our wide open eyes, he said, 'Now do you know why God gave me all this authority? That I might learn never to use it.' " On such principle he governed in the Order; sometimes, it may be surmised, to the bewilderment of those under his charge. "To fall back on authority was to confess failure,"—such, as one of his disciples says, was his attitude.

Father Huntington gave to freedom a passionate allegiance. His political activities had centred in the defense of it. His very establishment of a Religious Order had set many ecclesiastical authorities at defiance. During his last illness, the loved sister who had been the comrade of his youth sent him a message, that Death was the Great Adventure and the gate to liberty. He replied, quoting from memory lines which he had seen nigh a half century before inscribed on a building:

"Bolder they who first o'er cast  
Their dwelling in the habitable past,  
And, valiant, launched upon the sea  
Of storm-engendering liberty."

During his whole life, his allegiance to "storm-engendering liberty" was unfaltering. He never sought for shelter. Yet this was the man who opened his Rule with a meditation on Obedience that searches and that soars; and who could say:

"We obey, not that we may live more peacefully, but that we may die more perfectly."

## IV

His treatment of the vow of Chastity will not lead us on such debatable ground. Part II, which deals with it, bears the

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general head, "Mortification" and the connection is more obvious than that of Obedience with Prayer. In Father Huntington's stern but temperate discussion of "the disciplinary and penitential side of our religion," there is no trace of morbidity or of false asceticism. He never fails to recognize, not only the innocence but the potential sacramental glory, of the fleshly life: "He used to say that a body without a soul is a corpse, and a soul without a body is a ghost."

To technical celibacy is dedicated one brief page. How could he do otherwise than accord to the married state an equal dignity, when he remembered his own revered father? But there was a special vocation for some who wished to serve God with no complication of claims and no divided duties. He thought that our times were no better than St. Paul's, who seemed to feel that it was 'good for the present distress' that a priest remain unmarried, and he liked to quote Bishop Ken:

"A virgin priest the altar best attends,  
A state our Lord commands not, but commends."

Another note on Father Huntington's attitude: a friend having confided to him a wistful desire for fatherhood summarizes his response: "When a man becomes a celibate, this is not to kill out his desire for a family. He becomes a celibate because desire for a family was so large that nothing less than the whole world could be his family. He was not to give up his love for children. The Christian does not give up things because he has ceased to want them. Indeed he makes himself want them more and more. When they become to him dear as the apple of his eyes, then if his eye offends him he casts it down at the foot of the Cross."

There was no apathy allowed in this Christian code! But again comes the report: "Father Huntington said that he had never felt strongly the desire for fatherhood; what he felt, was

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the impulse of brotherhood. One of the phrases he especially loved was, 'The brother for whom Christ died.' Perhaps the most thrilling description in the New Testament to him, was 'Quartus, a brother.' "

Probably this second of the Three Vows was the easiest for him. He was popular and friendly with many girls in his youth, but there is no evidence that marriage ever attracted him. In his later life, no one of his myriad women penitents can ever have been sex-conscious in his presence. "Holiness means more than innocence, but includes the latter," says Father Whittemore. "My impression of the Father is that he was the most pure and innocent adult I have ever known."

In his call to mortification, he goes of course far beyond the confines of sex. Widely inclusive is his opening paragraph on the Vow:

"Our only standard in judging of the requirements of our vow is our Virgin Lord Himself. Whatever He would shrink to look at with His eyes, to say with His lips, to do with His Body, that we must not look at, say or do. Nay, what we could not imagine as finding a rest in His heart must not for a moment be suffered to rest in our hearts. St. Leo says that 'the body of the baptized is the flesh of the Crucified.' If this be true of every Christian, what should be true of us, who by religious profession daily offer ourselves to be transformed into Him?" He continues: "We must welcome all the disciplinary and penitential side of our religion, as furnishing us with the materials for a system of intrenchments against our enemies, whereby we may protect the precious gift of supernatural purity."

His subsequent treatment, while marked by consecrated common sense, never deviates from stern advocacy of all helps found useful through the Christian ages. Humility is again the

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first prerequisite; and unlike some of us he does not evade the painful relation between humility and humiliations: "The deepest humiliation we can experience arises from a true knowledge of ourselves. But such knowledge is possible to us only through the illumination of the Holy Ghost. . . . We must therefore seek the aid of the Holy Spirit that we may be humiliated by a real knowledge of our worse than nothingness." The resultant practical precept calls for an *examen* of conscience held in common twice a day, in addition to the private and particular *examen* every night. (Might such a rule lead in some cases to unwise self-consciousness, or even self-centredness? Only those who have practised it can tell.)

Careful provisions for fortnightly Confession are suggested. The Rule then passes to consideration of Silence, "the normal condition of the Religious." It grants that silence may seem a restrictive discipline at the outset, but makes clear that no one as he progresses in the spiritual way can fail to experience it as a privilege. No practical injunction in the Rule is more important than this; slowly but surely this lesson is learned by all practising Retreats. In a later section of the Rule, he returns to the ideal: "The stillness about the Cross, when the darkness gathered and the noises of the world died away; the unhurried movement of the Mass with souls absorbed in God; the hush of the Chapel with Our Lord's Sacramental Presence—these times and places will set before us the quiet that should ever brood within our walls." As to food, we can not emulate the austerity of the saints, but we are never to join the world in sneering at them; rather, "we must strive to follow them and share their spirit, taking our food with great reverence, and not at all as if we had a right to it, and not only meeting the appointed abstinences and fasts with courage, but making of them a spiritual feast, and praying God to enable us to deny

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ourselves more and more." It is remembered that when he visited his family, he would come back with recipes his Order might enjoy.

Here is suggested a little story about his advice to a young penitent thirsting for discipline, but reluctant to inconvenience her family by strict observance of formal fasts; for indeed one can make a perfect nuisance of oneself and become unpleasantly conspicuous, by such observance. Both painful results could be avoided, said Father Huntington, and excellent discipline secured, if she quietly and unobtrusively took only a nominal helping at each meal of the dish she liked best. She found the custom effective, as the effort to remember to observe it afforded quite discipline enough!

There is a lovely little chapter on Sleep. It opens with a slightly scornful allusion to the weakness of our modern constitutions and one recalls the anecdote told by Mrs. Sessions, how when her husband and she were living in a New York suburb, the whistled tune known only to her brother and herself signalled his arrival; and how, introduced at once to a comfortable bed, he slept round the clock. Also may be recalled the holy New England woman, who for years spent the night watches in vigil devoted to prayer for her descendants to the third and fourth generation; and how those descendants with hardly an exception were afflicted by mental disease. Again, the inveterate habit of ambitious College students—and too often teachers—of devoting the night to study; a habit fraught with sure promise of later nervous collapse. In our tense days, devastated with disaster, inhibited from power to relax, surely each moment of possible repose is a gift from God not to be slighted. But the technique Father Huntington enjoins can as no other means, ensure just such quietude.

"We can only strive to hallow our repose, by exercising

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great care to guard our thoughts before we lie down to rest, and by turning instantly to God whenever, during the hours of the night, we regain some measure of consciousness; as though His Voice had wakened us for an act of praise. The Great Silence must therefore be observed with much faithfulness, making it not only an exterior, but an interior silence, a silence of the heart."

Chapter VIII, "Of the Discipline," will have a more mediaeval ring than any other, to the modern reader; who will, however, do well to withhold judgment if he feels suitable respect for the cumulative testimony of many Christian ages. The ordinary layman may be a little surprised by the treatment in the next chapter, still under the head of Mortification, of the habit. This may be regarded lightly as a pleasing picturesque adjunct to the Religious life. Father Huntington, however, had always taken it very seriously, and to the Brothers it was evidently often an occasion of discipline. His concern in the matter appears in the minuteness of directions given in the Constitution of the Order, prescribing exact measurements and planning for every detail. Each had for him a mystical significance. "We are always to remember that the habit is a sacred expression of the character we are vowed to bear, as separating us from the world, as witnessing to our life of purity, of penance, and of holy joy, and as indicating that we are ever engaged in heavenly activities." "To him," someone has said, "it was a vital matter. The habit stood for the whole life. The whole life was a revolt, and the habit was the symbol of that revolt. There could be no truce with the world, there could be no compromise."

At first, the beautiful and expressive white habit was always worn, without as within the monastery, but the Rule now enjoins the black habit when in "the world," and today the

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Fathers may wear ordinary clerical apparel, except when taking part in the offices of the Church, when away from home.

Meticulous directions as to cleanliness and the scrupulous care of the person are the most modern portion of the Rule. It would seem to a mediaeval monk as queer and uncalled for as advice about Flagellation may appear to a modern. Excellent practical hints are found in the concluding paragraphs of this section. "To suppress all that would draw the attention of people to ourselves" is an obvious, but sometimes unheeded precept of good taste; and it is sensible to tell men never either to saunter or to appear in a hurry. Father Huntington does not encourage such hilarity as caused both scandal and delight to the contemporaries of St. Francis and his sons of the early days. "There should be an entire absence of all levity on the one hand and of all gloom or moroseness on the other." Joy, tempered perhaps by a little awe, naturally flourished in his own presence.

This section of the Rule concludes with restrained and tender treatment of Sickness and of Death.

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## CHAPTER XI

### *THE RULE OF THE ORDER. II*

#### I

OBEDIENCE, chastity, poverty. In relating the last of the Counsels of Perfection not to Mortification but to Good Works, Father Huntington is curiously modern. The fact might suggest that the primary source of this virtue was to him not asceticism but social compunction.

Both impulses are operative in that recurrent devotion of saintly souls to Holy Poverty, so bewildering to worldlings. As a rule, in early times asceticism had the lead. Yet the second impulse was strong in St. Francis, who in sure flash of an intuition unconditioned by history, such as he often knew, exclaimed: "Always I have taken less than I needed, lest I should defraud other poor folk of their portion, for to do otherwise would have been theft." And again: "Very great shame it is to me when I find anyone poorer than I am." But presently this feeling faded, replaced even in his own Order by the old dualism, with its dread of inherent evil in material good. Reviving today, it becomes an increasingly potent social force. Sensitized modern youth again and again knows restless distress when profiting by inequalities in possession or privilege:

"At present I'm a 'Have,' I suppose,—and it's a rotten situation," wrote that fine spirit, Winifred Holtby: <sup>1</sup> "Never be a 'Have.' . . . If you're a 'Have Not,' all that is yours is your

<sup>1</sup> *Letters to a Friend*. Winifred Holtby. By permission of The Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1938, p. 137.

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own. If you're a 'Have,' all that you get seems to be somebody else's, and the joy of having them goes—or goes at intervals. . . . Always is the desire to share them at the back of your mind, and the ache of impotence."

"We have food; others have none;  
God bless the Revolution."

More and more Christian young people sit down to meals in the spirit of that Grace. Intense misery in the presence of privilege unshared is, thank God, a crescent and driving power on the higher levels of civilization. One hopes that it is at least as strong among Christians as among Communists, but one feels a little fear, noting how often such misery is a chief factor in sending ardent youth of the *Intelligentzia* away from the Church into the ranks of the communist party.

There is no doubt that young James Huntington had felt this emotion from the very dawn of his vocation. Often it manifested itself, even in indirect ways; we recall his youthful attempts to eat in the kitchen; also, how he would go hungry on a Sunday rather than violate the workers' right to a half holiday by Saturday shopping. He was never a rich man, helping the poor; he became one of them just as far as he could. It has been rather quaintly suggested that in so doing he actually risked his social status, as no Englishman of birth and breeding would do in his own country! Whether this be so or not, Father Huntington fled compromise. He taught his boys at Holy Cross the glory of menial service; and what he taught he practised. "Father Slops" had been his pet name, given by the lads who saw him cleaning up.

"Poverty for him was not an abstraction; it meant the poor," says Father Schlueter: "He loved them with a very real and deep passion. In the beginning, it was his love of poverty that

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sent him on his quest. He wanted to help the poor. He wanted to belong to the poor. He wanted to understand the poor. And I think, that as it was true of God Himself that if He wanted to help the poor, He for their sakes had to become poor, so there was no other road but that."

Father Schlueter, by the way, relates these intense and wistful desires with devotion to the habit. "It was a way of being poor. Among his crowd, they had suits for morning and afternoon, summer and winter. But he had heard the call of Him Who said: 'If you have two coats, give one of them away.' There was no way to live in the world unless that suit was a habit. One of the things I remember was his aversion to having his boots blacked. He made some of us feel that it was a shameful thing. He wanted us to be like God, and when God pictured His divine call to us, it was not in the form of one having his boots blacked but in the form of a man kneeling at his brothers' feet, and washing them. You became like God when you blacked some one's boots; you became not like God when you sat and had your boots blacked. It was a question, on which side do you belong?"

"He wanted to belong to the poor." Of course he couldn't. When all is said, voluntary poverty accompanied by a comfortable sense of resources personal or communal in the background, has a sad sense of unreality about it. Father Huntington was sorrowfully aware of this, and we shall see how it affected his admonitions. When one of his boys brought him great joy by confiding to him a desire to enter the priesthood, he wrote: "You will understand I have lived among the poor; I know how they eat, how they work; I know how they live, starve, suffer. But I will never know how they feel, how they think. You know that."

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For certain temperaments, there is great relief in St. Clare's "Privilege of Poverty." Escape from responsibility; escape from that gnawing sense of guilt in privilege unshared. . . . But is such escape honest? Is it real?

A young penitent was avowing her craving for it to her Confessor,—a member of a Religious Order. She spoke of her revulsion from the beauty and comfort with which she was surrounded.

"You needn't think you would escape in an Order," said he. He waved his hand around the colored religious prints, cheap things if truth were told, on the Sacristy walls. "As for sacrifice, . . . what I have sacrificed is economic insecurity. My Order takes care of me; I have no personal financial worries any longer."

Voluntary poverty can never savor the full bitterness of destitution. It can never dispel the spiritual unease of those called to drink to the dregs the cup of economic fears. In vain the social imagination is trained today to explore as far as may be, in shame and penitence, the consciousness of the dispossessed. The separation remains, the limits are set.

The value of voluntary poverty is from this point of view restricted. But it can be intensely real in its disciplines. And surely it is also educational. The generous and tender-hearted wife of the millionaire, who, according to an eighteenth-century injunction, fulfills her duty by being "charitable out of the superfluity of her plenty" is less likely perhaps than the monk or the social worker to feel the strange birth-pangs of a new social order. . . . It does sometimes, not always, thank God, seem as if the eye of a certain needle were invisible to the very rich.

At the ordination of the beloved spiritual son just quoted, Father Huntington preached the sermon, and ended with this word to the Ordinand:

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“To fast among the hungering,  
To serve among the poor,  
To toil among the weary,  
And with the sick endure,—

“To intercede for sinners,  
The tempted to secure,  
Be this thy life-long pilgrimage,  
Most straight, most steep, most sure.”

Here was the way of personal peace. Here was the way of Life.

## II

We have been naturally led to look back for a moment to Father Huntington’s early experiences. But what we have been saying has nothing to do with the treatment of Poverty in the Rule. If we expect to find there a direct reflection of his early attitude or of his social and economic convictions, we shall be disappointed. The Rule leaves all such matters on one side. It faces inward, not outward. Beyond the alignment of the Vow with the law of Good Works, social compunction is never invoked as an incentive; neither do we find echoes of those preoccupations with problems of private property or of social inequalities which had marked his public career. The Rule penetrates straight to the heart of the personal life. And it cuts deep.

“By our vow of poverty not only are we called to a personal surrender of all earthly possessions, saving the Cross given us at our profession, but we are bound to live in the estate of poverty, governing ourselves at all times as having no dependence on earthly resources, and ready to endure in submission to God’s Will the utmost privation, even to the loss of life itself.

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"Thus we are led to seek to follow Our Lord in His poverty, sharing with Him in the limitations of Bethlehem and Nazareth, till He lead us to the deeper destitution of Gabbatha, and the dereliction of the Cross, to find, when all of earth and self has passed away, that Cross our all-sufficing treasure and His Love our never-ending reward." The winged words fly upwards. Toward Tolstoy, toward Thoreau, toward Francis, the vista opens; but how different the dynamic and the aim from that of the first two!

The social and the mystical are never far apart for Father Huntington, even if social emphasis is here related only to his own Order. For this, he was legislating; and the most distinctive thing in this section of the Rule is the application of the vow of Poverty to every detail of communal life. Here come echoes of his own experience: "As one means of impressing on ourselves the joy and freedom of holy poverty, we are to be especially glad to give ourselves to menial and manual labor, under obedience. We are to think at such times that we must perhaps be doing more for God if we were supporting ourselves by the labor of our hands than if we were preaching in great cities, with every mark of spiritual effectiveness." This Tolstoyan touch (we recall his early reading of Tolstoy) reminds us of "Father Slops," or of a picture cherished in sundry memories of "dear Father Allen" scrubbing floors. There is to be no waste. And "Above all we are ever to strive to rise up to the spiritual significance of our vow of Poverty, to find our wealth and our satisfaction in the divine love, and to rejoice in every opportunity of claiming the manifestation of that love by the consciousness of inward need and the pressure of outward destitution."

Still we move within the area of the Order; here, he says, is the first sphere for Good Works. Every word is weighed; and penetrating are these suggestions of the power of the vow to

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control the relations of the members to one another. Indeed the pregnant sentences touch the quick of the general art of Christian fellowship:

“Every act of self assertion, every thought of self satisfaction, every impulse of self gratification, is an unfaithfulness to Jesus and a sapping of our community life. Every gain in humility, every advance in self distrust, every victory over self love, is a strengthening of the whole community, and a glorifying of our Divine Lord.” *Multum in parvo!* Every group might well ponder this analysis of poverty of spirit. To note from how many angles the absence of the proprietary instinct might clear the way for brotherhood, is an excellent theme for religious meditation. For here is the gage and guarantee of social harmony, the only protection against those twin devils always whispering in the ear of those who own riches, material or other: possessiveness, and the will to power.

“The Christian does not give up things because he does not want them,”—so Father Huntington’s attitude has been beautifully reported. “Indeed, he makes himself want them more and more. A monk does not give up money because he despises it. More than anyone else, he ought to know its value, its power, its desirableness. He ought to want a million and then at the call of God surrender everything.” Here is the inward detachment which every section of the Rule of the Holy Cross seeks to foster; and here we pass from the individual within the community to envisaging the community itself, as a living whole. More subtly insidious to a group than to a single person may be the double lure of wealth: the craving for power, and the longing to have wherewithal to serve. The Church herself is hard pressed.

Father Huntington’s discussion proceeds to the ordering of the collective life; to the officers and their functions,—and here the thought of Obedience and of Mortification blends

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with that of Poverty and Good Works—as indeed the three virtues spring from one spiritual root. The duties of the Superior, of the Novice Master, of the Guest Master: the Superior for instance, “more than any other must have no will of his own; he must feel as no other the pressure of poverty.” Much is wisely said about the activities of the Fathers, the “Good Works” both within the group and without. With attention always focused on that “Living Organism,” the community, the Father Founder faces in the light of the vow of poverty the most difficult questions of the corporate life.

He wanted his Order to be poor. “While we may be led to ask God for material wealth to accomplish various works, we are to ask yet more earnestly, in a real spirit of detachment and entire dependence upon Him, whatever He may give. We are to remind ourselves that whenever we willingly admit the thought ‘How much we could do if only we had the material means,’ we are probably hindering God from accomplishing through us those very ends which we desire for His glory, and that if He were to give us the means while we are in that unfaithfulness to Holy Poverty, we should find them a cause of weakness, paralyzing our work for Him.

“We are then to look for the riches of God to be given us more fully as we depend less upon the riches of the world, perhaps as we are more deprived of what is now under our control.” Brave sentences, and true.

The Corporate Life! Can the vow of Poverty be observed by a community as a whole, apart from the individual member? Vexed question, persistent throughout monastic history, since the hour when the ideal, triumphantly escaping from the early individualism of the desert, sought to embody itself in group life. Witness St. Francis’ horror of corporate possession, which was one great cause of his Agony, witness the stubborn, futile, defeated struggle of his sons the Zealots, to be true to his idea.

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Witness the scandal of monastic wealth at the Reformation; witness, if we may slip down the centuries, such monastic endowments as have been reported from contemporary Spain. Well, danger is small of scandal from endowments of any sort for the Order of the Holy Cross. Such were apparently minute, from a modern standard, and certainly the Fathers did not shrink from hardships; their living was "a bit austere." One recalls the "getting up at five in the morning, and breaking their way through the ice to get a bath." When the time came for them to leave Westminster, the financial inducement was a legacy of three thousand dollars—"the largest legacy, up to that time, that the Order had yet received." Luckily they were all young.

Father Huntington never liked endowments. He shrank from them to the very end, as is evident from correspondence at the time when, being a practical man, he realized that they must be sought. Perhaps the general problem of corporate ownership never vexed him with the biting question as to the source of wealth, as it has vexed more radical and recent thinkers. But he faced the possible blessing of outward as well as inward destitution absolutely without evasion. As the Order grew, however, the need of increasing resources must have pressed on it. An appeal he sent out from Kent, apparently in 1924, shows him practising the mendicancy which St. Francis regarded as so much purer a Christian virtue than generosity:

"As Superior of the Order of the Holy Cross, I am responsible for the material as well as the spiritual welfare of my Community. The present financial condition of our affairs is such that I am compelled to ask your help. It is several years since I have made such an appeal. Certain small legacies have been received which I was able to use for the maintenance and upkeep of Holy Cross. It is contrary to our principles to put such legacies aside as endowment, and as a matter of fact even

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with these legacies we have lived a hand to mouth existence.

"I know how much our friends are doing in their generous support of our separate works. . . . On the other hand it must be realized that Holy Cross must be maintained as Mother House of these activities. Every man I assign to the branch houses reduces the earning capacity of the Mother House. At the latter the men are trained to keep the branch houses equipped. Above all the Life of Prayer must be maintained at Holy Cross as the very center and heart of our work.

"I do not think that it is generally known how much the Monastery is being used as a center of spiritual activity. During the past year over five hundred guests have been enrolled and all we have is placed at their disposal irrespective of the alms they offer. . . . I am therefore at this time asking you for an offering for the support and maintenance of the work of the community which centers about the life of the Mother House at Holy Cross."

Such an appeal was not easy for him to make. Aristocrat as he was to his finger tips, it is suggested that his New England pride may have sharpened his aversion a little. Yet he did what was necessary to do. The passage just quoted clearly suggests, however, the permanent policy he would have desired for the Order. Endowment for its works, yes; for Kent, St. Andrews, Liberia. But for the Mother House, never. In the earlier days, we learn, Father Huntington would insist on giving away the balance if any surplus remained at the end of the financial season. So to this day the sons of St. Francis at San Damiano in Assisi grow on the lands they control only fruit and such other produce as can be immediately consumed; never wheat, or anything that can be stored for the future.

Indignant repudiation should meet the suggestion sometimes heard, that the distaste entertained by some members of the Order for Father Huntington's political or social activity

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sprang consciously or unconsciously from fear of alienating rich patrons. True, some of the Father Founder's early utterances, as quoted in former chapters, would hardly have appealed to such patrons, but we may rest assured that no Father of the O.H.C. would ever have been affected by bias of this type. Any prejudice which may have existed would have sprung from reasons unrelated to the practical advantage of the Order. These were men pledged to sacrificial love as the law of life. One friend very near him says that when challenged by the inevitable question as to pressure from privileged donors on the policy of the Order, he would never reply, evading with a certain evident sadness. When visiting his family, he would ask them their attitude, would listen a little wistfully, and say nothing. It has been assumed by various people that he was never quite happy in his inability to square the noncommittal policies of the Order with his own convictions. Inevitably, he knew the pain and problem involved in group activity of any kind, with its constant call to adaptation if not to compromise. From such tests, the Church herself is not immune.

There was refuge for him, however sharp the discipline, in his profound passion for Holy Obedience. He must have welcomed with relief the times when he was free from responsibility. It has been said that he was scrupulously silent on public affairs during the long periods when he was under authority, but that the moment he became Head of the Order again, he would resume his comments. Such statements need verification.

## III

In his little book, *Bargainers and Beggars*, published in 1919, Father Huntington came to close grips with his subject. The book is an analytical Meditation on the Parable of the Laborers

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in the Vineyard, and the very title shows his sensitiveness to the relentless claims of Holy Poverty. Ever since the time of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, the Gospel for Septuagesima Sunday has invited economic application, so clearly is the principle of the Living Wage suggested in it, so cogently does it illustrate the S. Simonien thesis, "To each according to his need." No wonder that Ruskin's noble book is cherished by Gandhi. But Father Huntington's approach is from a different angle, and he probes deeper. First things first!

Writing when he does, the contemporary situation is vivid to him: "No one can doubt what work lies before us. It is the building of a new world, to take the place of that which has passed away in the flames of the Great War."<sup>1</sup> His opening chapter abounds in illustrations and reflections drawn from his contacts with working men, and his experience with the Unemployed lends restrained vividness to his picturing of those whom "no man hath hired." But he draws no inferences concerning industrial relationships or a new economic order. The "new world" must be built out of "individual men and women." Man's relation to God is primary: "If we would be heard when we pray, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' we must have prayed first,—and witnessed to our prayers by our life,—that the Father's Name should be hallowed, His Kingdom come, His will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." And the true relation is that of mendicancy: Beggars All! The book is a plea for poverty carried to the same point of intense self-naughting presented in the Rule with such vibrating power. Rarely, since St. Francis, with his paradoxical sweeping away all lower ethic based on justice, has there been more moving defense of that spiritual poverty which springs in man from the interplay of divine and human love. "The line that divides the

<sup>1</sup> *Bargainers and Beggars. A Study of the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard.* By James O. S. Huntington, O.H.C. Holy Cross Press, 1919, p. 77.

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Bargainers from the Beggars runs athwart all organizations"; but on the relation of man to his maker, all human relationships depend.

Father Huntington's stress like Von Hügel's is on "Givenness"; the Divine Largesse before which all fretful protests in the name of justice are disavowed; which forever gives "Unto this Last" as unto the first. To such largesse, only adoring humility, only inward as outward destitution, can rightly respond.

His book is dedicated "To the Beggars." How wise he is, thus to emphasize the abiding values of inward poverty! Should the promised day ever dawn when an economy of scarcity yields to an economy of abundance, the motive of social compunction, long potent and still essential, will cease to obtain; but the need for spiritual indigence, reinforced and maintained by interior disciplines, will still persist. The two motives, the social and the religious, can not be severed, but it is the second that endures. Even the old Greeks knew it, with their distaste for excess and their demand for a noble "*ascesis*" if personality is to be fulfilled. And today, certain younger groups, remote from Christian inspiration, gather into "cells" as we have already suggested, recognizing stringent self-imposed disciplines of poverty as part of their technique, in preparation for the sacrificial tests sure to accompany the advent of the emergent social order. Their motive, indirectly, is in part social still. But not wholly; for they know that personality itself is destroyed by greed for possession, released and enriched by abstinence and self-restraint. Under all conditions, in whatever culture or civilization, Christ's warning against Riches will retain their terrible cogency: "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but My words shall not pass away," said He.

These broodings over Father Huntington's treatment of the Vow of Poverty, may well conclude with his notes on medita-

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tions given to his brothers in Retreat. First, on "The Gold of Active Service."

1) "As poor yet making many rich."

True evangelical Poverty consists in a putting away of all sense of proprietorship. Whatever we claim as, in an absolute sense, our own, becomes a barrier between ourselves and others, a barrier between ourselves and God. Shut up into ourselves, we can not get near enough to others to make them rich.

2) "Such as I have, I give thee."

The poor are 'rich in faith,' and the faith that can remove mountains can say 'Rise up and walk.' The love of God is the best gift that we can give to others, that which really enriches, and enables as well. And if we give all for God and ourselves to Him, He will give Himself in love to us.

3) "Freely ye have received, freely give."

God's grace is always a gratuity. We can never purchase it with money.

Then, Notes of August 27, 1917, on Freedom from Worldly Care.

"Neither put on two coats."

"These specific instructions . . . seem at least to suggest abiding principles of the Church's mission. They are to warn us against the spirit of acquisition, or luxury, or fussy anxiety as to conveniences or comforts. We must try to go forth unhampered by possessions, lightly accoutréed. There is always a danger that the multiplication of material things will overlay the active manifestation of the human spirit, the only adequate instrument of the Divine. 'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things that he possesseth.' One reason why

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the poor are so 'human' is that they are not taken up with the multiplicity of business affairs. . . . The sense of possession increases rapidly as more and more attention is given to things because they are one's own. The mind is filled with solicitude for things that are personal to oneself, and inevitably the common welfare has a smaller share of one's consideration. The life becomes impoverished and shrinks into itself. Against all this Our Lord would protect His messengers. He reduces their luggage to the barest necessities, to set them free for their work."

These were Meditations for the Order; but might not all Christians take the words to heart?

## IV

"He that is dead is free from sin." The vow of Poverty, like that of Obedience and that of Chastity—what are they all but means to the achievement of that mystical death to self which is the earnest of resurrection? The Counsels of Perfection! Diverse approaches to the sanctuary where the Eternal Lover waits, that he may unite the soul to Himself, in the union of sacrificial love.

What do these Counsels demand beyond the ideal cherished by every Christian in his heart? "The all-inclusive principle of the Religious Life is entire devotion to God," said Father Huntington to his brothers. Now nothing in essence less than this expected of every Christian. Why have the Counsels been so ignored and discredited ever since the Reformation, in the whole Protestant world?

Of course, as already suggested, they can all be misconstrued. But, sublimated and consecrated, as Father Huntington and all the saints have conceived them, they are the para-

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doxical law of life itself. Perhaps the persistent disregard of them, dating from the sixteenth century, in large sections of Christendom, is partly because the ground-swell of democracy, silently rising from the social depths, submerged and destroyed the implication they seemingly convey of a spiritual aristocracy and of that very mischievous idea, a double code for Christians. How pathetically hard men tried, in Calvin's Geneva, in early New England, to impose an absolute code of virtue on a whole community! They have never succeeded. Nor have segregated and minority groups succeeded, such as perpetually reappear, bearing stubborn witness to an unquenchable flame of aspiration toward a perfection not native to earth-bound humanity. Too often, the monastic Orders, outstanding examples of such groups, developed their own type of worldliness; nor has any group, monastic or other, ever escaped compromise with the world, the flesh—or, perhaps, the devil.

Neither, for the matter of that, can compromise be avoided by the individual; we have pointed this out, again and again. All very well for young James Huntington to limit his expenses to \$300.00 a year; where did the money come from? Is there ever any guarantee that the sources of wealth are righteous?

Yet the mighty hidden power of Christian Absolutism has reasserted itself continually; for instance, in the revival of Religious Orders, during the very rise to universal control of a social-industrial culture frankly committed, as no previous culture had been, to open denial of the Counsel of Poverty, while the Counsel of Obedience had undergone, to say the least, curious transformation. There are few more striking examples of continuous dialectical tension in the movement of human affairs than this revival. The monastic concept had never been

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allowed to lapse in the Roman Church; now, on a tiny scale, if you will, but with real vitality, it had for fifty odd years, been operative in Anglicanism. With the Order of the Holy Cross, it appeared for the first time as an authentic and indigenous American phenomenon, adding its cumulative testimony to the Way of the Cross as the only Way of Life and Peace. One is interested to note that this happened at a new point of culture, when democracy based on the profit motive began in the mind of many to find itself defeated.

Probably young James Huntington had never been troubled by wondering whether Christians in general, remaining in the world, could live without compromise. His generous, humble spirit never claimed preëminence in sanctity for members of Religious Orders; no good Religious ever does that. But he did feel that Religious must "Set the pace" for their fellow Christians in the world. "They illustrate not only the spirit that should animate all Christian hearts, but they 'point the way,' to the lines along which all should move." Longing to gather together those who like him heard this call, he was now beginning to succeed; slowly, surely, the Order was growing. Alas, an ideal becomes enfeebled the moment it is shared; this is the sorrowful unmistakable fact. The Rev. George Huntington had questioned the value of permanent vows; but his brother's brave experiment was succeeding, and the Order has remained, often at cost, true to its commitments. Yet the question will not down; whether the O.H.C. or any other Order can wholly disentangle itself from the world and the evil thereof. Nor can democratic idealism ever rest contented by the achievement of a group avowedly living under conditions impossible to most plain honest and wistful Christian men. What value, in ultimate analysis, can be ascribed to groups which at their best can embody only partially the Christian ideal, and which rep-

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resent a mode of life debarred to the majority? This is not the only field of enquiry in which the Christian Absolutist is hard put to it nowadays.

May we not say that the value of the Religious revival is two-fold: Symbolic, and Prophetic?

Of both the symbolic and the practical worth of such fellowships there can be no doubt. The Church and the world desperately need the shining example of those who, whether on the mission field or in convents, quite simply prove that they count the world well lost for Christ. *Solvitur ambulando*. The values of Father Huntington's Order have been triumphantly vindicated. The loss of the spiritual opportunity offered to chosen individuals would terribly impoverish the Church. That they offer a solution of the agonizing problems of divided loyalty which confront the modern Christian, we may not claim. Yet a provisional and relative service they indubitably have. Is it too audacious to suggest that their value is prophetic also? That as the Father Founder said, "They point the way, to the lines along which all should move"? If so, do they not "point the way" because their members walk in it; because the spiritual attitude which the Father Founder so rightly stressed as primary, must not only in a Religious Order but in all Christian groups demand its outward, sacramental expression?

The Christian world sorrowfully knows itself abandoned to compromise. The Religious Orders, in their corporate life, can not fully escape. Nor is their experiment up to date complete. But in so far as Poverty, Chastity and Obedience actually obtain among them, demonstrable sources of joy and fruitfulness, they might hold an amazing promise of a future in which these laws, which simply summarize the Beatitudes, should control the social system, and reshape the motivation of men. These are the laws to which Christianity owes its life, and

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to them the civilization of the future, if it is to be saved from destruction, must more and more conform.

To justify Religious Orders on such far-reaching lines would never have occurred to Father Huntington and our dream presupposes a Christian world. But we can not help repeating that he did not like endowments; nor do we forget his allegiance to the revolutionary implications of the Single Tax.



## CHAPTER XII

*PERSONAL TRAITS*

## I

**I**N no way can we draw nearer to Father Huntington than through the Rule which he composed. The unconscious self-revelation comes from the depths. But it is time to supplement echoes from the Sanctuary with reports from other sources.

Life at Westminster was not devoid of troubles. Yet the account of it is a religious idyll, a tale of eager youth and consecrated joy. Now again came change. In the summer of 1898 a young man, W. G. Webster, still in deacon's Orders, was drowned off Newfoundland, in the wreck of the *Burgoyne*. The legacy of three thousand dollars which he left to the Order was acclaimed at once, as sign that the time had come to secure a permanent foundation by the erection of a Mother House to meet expanding needs. The little house at Westminster, where for twelve years "The Order enjoyed a course of quiet deep devotion," had never been meant for a monastery, and was in sundry ways neither suitable nor adequate; the community, as Father Hughson says,<sup>1</sup> had outgrown its setting. So steps were taken, "with due deliberation" "to secure the present site at West Park, New York." The monastery was designed by a Boston architect, Mr. Henry Vaughan, and Churchmen from every part of America con-

<sup>1</sup> See *An American Cloister*. By S. C. Hughson, O.H.C. Holy Cross Press, 1931.

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tributed to the original fund which had first made the enterprise seem possible. The House "was dedicated by Bishop Whitehead of Pittsburgh, acting for Bishop Potter of New York, on May 19, 1904, the feast of the great Benedictine Abbot and Bishop, St. Dunstan." The Order at the time of removal comprised six members and several novices. The roster was as follows: Fathers J. O. S. Huntington, Sturges Allen, Henry B. Sargent, Shirley Carter Hughson, Frederick Herbert Sill, William Francis Mayo. Father Allen had been the second professed, in 1888. Father Sargent entered his novitiate in 1891, having previously spent a year in Holy Cross Mission, and worked subsequently among the colored people in Memphis; with his Profession, in 1894, the Order at last attained its needed three members. Fathers Hughson and Sill had been professed at Westminster in May 1902. Father Mayo was still a novice at the time of the move.

The change found Father Huntington in his prime, just fifty years old. Here was to be from now on his centre and his home. From this time the deep river of his life was to flow steadily, and on the surface smooth. Here, midway in his story, "*nel mezzo del cammin*," it is well to pause, and note so far as may be what manner of man he was.

The biographer has a harder task than the novelist. Each wants to reveal his subject in his habit as he lived, a distinct individual, differing from every other man on this crowded little planet. But the novelist can give his imagination free play; the biographer dares not. Hampered by the uneasy quest for evasive reality, haunted by fear of disloyalty to fact, aware of the numberless angles from which every personality must be seen if it is to be known in the round, he seeks for witnesses; and is best pleased when they do not too well agree. He studies every scrap of his subject's self-revelation, in word and deed; and after long search is all too likely to miss the mark.

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For who shall sound "the abysmal depths of personality"? Who dares to say that he really knows his closest friend. "I can not learn the whole of the book of Thy Personality, or even the book of one human being," writes Father Lippert, in his volume, *A Modern Job speaks with God*.<sup>1</sup> . . . "Though I were to examine one man thoroughly, to the very bottom, there might come an hour when I should realize that I had actually found out nothing about him." At long last, when all evidence is in, one is forced to summon back the exiled imagination.

The best method is to let the man speak for himself; the next, to catch as many facets of his character and conduct as possible reflected by other people. It is a help, to gain glimpses of him from his relatives, his friends, his disciples, from those who disliked him. Especially the last. It is difficult to be a positive person without arousing antagonism in somebody. But in this case we get no such assistance; unluckily, or luckily, no one apparently ever disliked Father Huntington. We have had pictures of his joyous boyhood, singularly privileged, wholesome, and fine. We have watched the outgoing ardor of the young crusader, riding atilt against the outward and inward evils of civilization. We have looked as far as reverence permitted into his hidden life. What do we note as now we turn to his maturity?

Perhaps the impressions of the biographer may be permitted. Father Huntington, as met during many Retreats covering a long span of years, seemed first and foremost an integrated personality. He was a realist; sane as he was kind. His obviously wide and intimate knowledge of human foibles did not preclude the evident respect and affection toward people which shone from him with quiet, steady light. He gave as

<sup>1</sup> *A Modern Job Speaks with God*. By Peter Lippert, S. J. Translated by George N. Shuster. Longman's, Green & Co., N. Y., 1937, p. 52.

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has been said an impression of reticence,—an attitude which may spring either from self-consciousness or from the opposite. Father Huntington was, I think, reserved, because he was not very much interested in himself, or was in any case more interested in others. His biography presents a very different problem from that of an Amiel, for instance. His was a life of constant self-giving. Records are lacking of personal crises, of outer entanglements, of clashes or conflicts; it is therefore evident that his story must be largely a chronicle of serene external activities.

It is surely true that he was in many ways an unusually happy man. Whether striding over New England hills enjoying pleasant encounters with the country folk, or living by choice among New York tenements under conditions which shocked his taste and seared his conscience, whether fighting those conditions in the name of love, or emerging from monastic seclusion to bring new life to waiting souls, he imparted to all who came in contact with him a refreshing sense of vigor and harmony. One could not easily associate the idea of sacrifice with him; either in the severe self-inflicted disciplines of his consecrated life, or in his deliberate choice of uncongenial and detested outward conditions. He was no ascetic, if ascetism means—as it doesn't—rejection of natural joy.

But that the victory was won at cost, who can doubt? Suffering is ever the measure of love. Perhaps we have already been able, in his case, to probe some of its sources.

Father Whittemore, his successor, has sought with loyal tenderness to make the beloved "Father Founder" a living presence, to the novices of these later days. He begins his addresses: "In the first place, you would be impressed by his bigness, physically, mentally, and spiritually. If the Father Founder had sat in the same room with such men, let us say, as

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Hitler, Mussolini, and Franklin Roosevelt, they would have been impressed, one feels, with the fact that there was a man with them bigger than them all. He would have sat with them without saying much, but when he did speak they would have listened with intense respect and with no little awe." Father Whittemore goes on to say that Father Huntington was "inspiring" partly because he was "scarey," and partly "because he was holy."

## II

Holiness! One shrinks from using the word. How can it be defined? Most of us, alas, do not know much about it apart from the contemplation of Our Lord. Certainly none of us knows it from within, and we are lucky if we have ever met a single person with whom we can associate the term. Every one of us, *Laus Deo*, has met many good people; but the holy?

One fact is sure, holiness is no negative quality, and it has no connection with the sanctimonious, the depressing and depressed, neither do the stereotyped stiff figures in many stained-glass windows express it. Evidence goes to show that there is tremendous variety among holy people; theirs is an economy of abundance rather than of scarcity. But perhaps the reason why Father Whittemore speaks in one breath of "the holy" and "the scarey" is that a holy man or woman always gives the impression of finding his native air in a region remote from common experience. He inhabits a different country from that in which we habitually walk. However eager his tenderness and swift his sympathy, however keen his insight and his sense of humour, there is something aloof about him. His eyes are open to what we do not see, his ears to what we do not hear. One would hardly apply this description to James Huntington in his earlier years, but in

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the period where we now find him, and to the end of his life, we must. "He not only wrote the Rule, but lived it," said Father Whittemore to the novices; that means what any student of the Rule can see. It means he walked with God.

Therefore with lovely naturalness and with outgoing sympathies amazing in scope he walked with men. Of course this was where much of his suffering came in. Become a recluse if you would avoid suffering. Father Huntington was never a recluse. No, not in spite of the severe monastic silence,—sometimes oppressive to guests,—and the recurrent hours of meditation and prayer. He would never have founded a purely contemplative and enclosed Order. He and his spiritual sons move among their fellows in ardent fullness of life. "Let me put another tremendous quality beside his bigness," says Father Whittemore. "This was his faculty of inspiring affection in all sorts and conditions of people. At a large Church Conference toward the end of his life, he was introduced as 'the best loved man in the Episcopal Church.' In the crowded hall there was ten minutes of loud applause."

The art of fellowship came naturally to him. One of an unusually delightful family, he had been a sociable and singularly attractive person from his childhood on. Now that he had withdrawn his energies from active service to great public causes, the emphasis in his life fell more and more on personal relations. He never for a moment weakened in refusal to confine the duty of the Church to evangelism or personal ministrations; but for himself, he had decided, at what cost he never told, to devote himself to individuals, first within, and then without, his community. His Order was to be built up through personal contacts. As for his parish, it became in a very real sense the whole Episcopal Church. And what loving keenness marked his intercourse with both men and women!

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"He always seemed to understand the subtlest thoughts of others better than they did themselves," says Father Whittemore. He loved "our fallen race" (how convenient is the old unpopular phrase!). But he must have gone through the years in a state of perpetual tension between disillusion and reverence. For he did not idealize men; he was entirely realistic in his dealings with them. It has been said that there was in him a combination of utter truthfulness and shrewd caution. His belief in men was a reasoned policy:

"I think one of the great powers of the Father," Father Schlueter is speaking now, "was his marvelous trust in other people, and especially those whom the world distrusted. It was by this trust that he won them. He was always helping a crowd of people,—drug addicts, people who in this way or that the world counted as cast-offs. On more than one occasion he has come to me with a letter . . . with an almost outrageous request for help, for money. He would say, 'What do you think I ought to do?' The answer always was: 'I know what you will do,—you will send it.' And he would answer, 'Well, Edward, if we don't trust people, who will trust them? If no one trusts them, how can they ever learn to trust God?' On more than one occasion, he has come afterward and told me that his trust had not been misplaced; the person had made good. . . . Of course this did not always happen," adds Father Schlueter demurely. Of course it didn't! Father Huntington had ample intimacy with human nature on the seamier side.

The passage just quoted expresses his constant attitude. After the move to Westminster, the area of social contacts shifted a little, though among his devoted friends were the employees of the railroad to New York. But his attitude never varied. Father Whittemore corroborates the practical way in which he supplemented spiritual assistance; he, too, speaks of

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the "drunkards, drug addicts, etc." never lacking among Father Huntington's friends.

"He was always trying to get a job for this person or that. When I became Superior, I found a whole sheaf of I.O.U.'s in the Bursar's office, which were pledges to repay the Order for loans given years before by our Father Founder. He was a little sensitive sometimes at the thought that his brethren might not approve of his benefactions. I can remember occasions when he called one or two of the younger men into his office, and gave five or ten dollars to be delivered to some needy person, with the admonition to say nothing about it."

His thoughtfulness for others extended to minute details. "One of the ways in which it manifested itself," writes Father Whittemore, "was his concern for the eyes of type-setters in Poughkeepsie, where the Holy Cross magazine was published at the time. Very frequently he saw to it that typewriter ribbons were renewed on this account throughout the monastery. He once rewrote an entire manuscript of mine in his own handwriting, in order to make it more legible for the type-setters. Those who are familiar with Father Huntington's handwriting may make their own deductions as to mine," adds Father Whittemore.

"I do not think he was often fooled except when he knew that he was being fooled, and was deliberately willing to be fooled in order that some other soul might become wise." This is Father Schlueter speaking. "I can think of no one who showed such abandon of trust, especially toward those we call sinners. Yet he was shrewdly cautious when it came to dealing with his own crowd. He would warn us against putting things in writing which might be wrongly used; how many times he warned me against people who wrote asking for confidential information; he would always insist that Confessions

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be in a public place. Many of us young priests learned all the pastoral theology we know from him."

Father Schlueter goes on rather amusingly:

"A young priest does not need to be good-looking or attractive. The mere fact that he is unmarried makes him a centre of interest to mothers of unmarried daughters. Some of these become almost savagely interested in parish work. How is one to know whether it is all for God and souls, or just interest in the unmarried rector?" Wise as a serpent was Father Huntington. "I was simply to ask the young woman to work under some older woman, plead a lack of time, and ask her if she would not please report to Mrs. So and So, or to some elderly Miss So and So. If she was interested in the work, she would be glad to do that. If she was only interested in the rector, she would go away very angry. This is a specimen of the kind of advice he would give."

More perplexing matters distressed him than the perennial idiocies of young women when priests are in question. Like all who plunge into the vortex of action away from safe harbors of theory, he was wounded again and again in the house of his friends. Trust! It is the Christian attitude, but valiant faith is sometimes needed, to sustain it. Father Huntington is reported to have returned in deep sadness from a meeting of the Knights of Labor crying out almost in despair: "Every one there distrusted every body else." Experience too common, alas, at other than Labor meetings. Suspicions, divisions, acrid discordance, among the groups religious or social, to which one vows allegiance, are the common lot. Reverence, or disillusion! Which is the more abiding attitude? Perhaps the surest and only way to unite respect for human nature with clear-sightedness is to cling close to Jesus of Nazareth. He, in Whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead, yet Who

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was also of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. He not only loved men, but believed in them. As we become like Him and look at men and women through His eyes, we can believe in them too.

### III

Salient qualities in Father Huntington's younger years are initiative and courage; as he grows older, emphasis falls more and more on the higher note of humility and patience. Beautifully those who knew and loved him write of these qualities. They were not inconsistent with what has been called, as already noted, "a certain arrogance," an unconscious awareness, if the paradox may be allowed, of his background and breeding. Facts were facts to him. He was fully alive to social distinctions, and would sometimes refer to the difference of background of the various Fathers "saying that if it were not for the grace of God many of us would not have walked across the street to speak to certain of the others." His vigorous mind was impatient of weakness and stupidity, and he occasionally bullied feeble people, doubtless without meaning to. At the same time, "to my mind it is only honest to acknowledge that there seemed to be a real streak of cowardice when it came to dealing with the more self-willed. This meant that the latter sometimes got their way at the expense of their weaker brethren," . . . or at their own expense.

Yet no one could bear stronger witness than Father Whittemore to the Father Founder's "supernatural humility." Was his attitude cowardice? Or humble wisdom?

Vivid little personal traits, now humorous, now touching, slip into the tender record. He is said to have been a shy man—one would never have suspected it—and therefore to have

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tried especially hard to be gracious. He welcomed all guests to the monastery with peculiar charm and courtesy. He moved clumsily, shoving aside little objects that got in his way. Even when old, he insisted on carrying his own bags, to the embarrassment of his juniors, and he made his own bed wherever he was. That he always had to fight against the insidious "curse of scrupulosity," we learn from his earnest meditations given for priests; this danger as experienced by him, Father Whittemore relates to his New England heritage. It is a surprise to learn that his healthy spirit suffered in more ways than one from acute sensitiveness. He didn't like dogs, seeming to have a nervous distaste for them. A more important instance is his exaggerated concern over any least illness in his household, and his extreme dread of disease and death.

This was an inherited trait; his father when a boy had been full of what his grandmother called "fidgetty fears." There is an amusing story of the future Bishop, premature victim of a terror of germs, insisting on perpetually washing his hands; tucking ends of doughnuts which he had touched with his fingers beneath the table for fear of contamination, and mournfully consuming them at the impatient bidding of his mother, with the comment: "Mother, I will do it, but I shall die." "Very well, dear, you may die; but eat them up," returned the firm parent. Father Huntington had from his youth up to fight similar fear of germ and disease. When he was a little chap, "Jamie" would run anxiously to the family doctor in Cambridge. Once he confided that he had swallowed a piece of glass. "An excellent remedy, sometimes; I've used it myself," rejoined that kindly if unveracious person. Again, Jamie had poisoned his finger tips. After he grew up, he was as anxious for others as for himself, and rather tormented his Brothers when they were going to Liberia with warning

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against "jiggers and Driver ants." He was very careful of himself, too; the brothers still smile, remembering how he carried a certain medicine bottle on a long journey, only to discover that it had been empty all the time. Still funnier is the tale of the period when, having developed a fad for drinking a great deal of water, he carried around with him a large black bottle full of that innocent fluid, and would now and then take a great swig of it, to the amazement and horror of his fellow travellers in the train.

That last anecdote brings to mind an occasion in the early years, while the Fathers still wore the beautiful white habit outside the monastery. Father Huntington was conducting a Retreat for the Society of Companions of the Holy Cross, which was at that time meeting on the campus of Dummer Academy, South Byfield, Mass. Through some contretemps the friends of the Academy had chosen the date of the Retreat for a circus, to raise funds for the school. Memory vividly recalls how Father Huntington, striding oblivious over the green in his long white garb, was joyously hailed as part of the show.

He enjoyed the fun of such a situation. His merry spirit never flagged down the long years; he wrote gravely to a penitent that a sense of humour was a necessary element in the Religious vocation. His persistent memory had stored his mind with absurd rhymes, like that of the "gum-chewing girl and the cud-chewing cow," and he was always full of anecdotes to amuse the monastery guests. He had a noiseless laugh, which pleased the novices; he enjoyed jokes on himself. With a delighted twinkle he must have met the problem of an anxious priest in a Mission he was holding in the South. His parishioners, said the incumbent, would never stand having to address a Protestant clergyman as "Father." Father

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Huntington cogitated a moment: "Let them call me Colonel," he said triumphantly; and so they did.

The breadth of his reading and his intellectual vigor and activity impressed all who came near to him. He said once that more than average intellect is requisite to sanctity. (One wonders; how about Santa Fina, or The Little Flower?) He loved to discuss, though not to argue, and perhaps drew the line better than some people succeed in doing; he "constantly opened the eyes of his spiritual sons to intellectual vistas," says one of them; but "the minute his interlocutor became combative, he brought the subject to a close." To the end of his life, he read the latest books; disciplined to his finger tips, his instinct was yet always to respond "Yes" rather than "No" to a new idea. He encouraged men to "live dangerously" in the inner life as in the outer; we recall him boldly asserting, in an arresting phrase, that each of the saints was within a hair's breadth of becoming a heretic; a good theme for a Ph.D. thesis. He had the inconvenient and baffling habit of seeing truth on both sides of a question, carrying his resultant attitude so far that he sometimes gave the impression of evasiveness and inconsistency. But he was really Hegelian if not Marxist in his conviction that truth is synthetic and that progress comes through reconciliation of opposites. "Now every problem the world has ever known," says Father Whittemore, "involves two elements which may be characterized respectively as the body and soul of the matter. Father Huntington would not sacrifice either one for the other. He wanted the fullest emphasis on both. . . . This riding of two horses at once, or (to use another simile), this holding one side of the truth in the right hand and the other in the left, is specially evident in his appreciation of all natural and human values. As I said before, he never entirely escaped from the last

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remnants of his Puritan background, but the occasional slight suggestions of this fact only made more significant the broad tolerant sympathy of his reasoned position.

His Brothers were impressed by the infinite pains he took in preparing his addresses, and in adapting them to his prospective hearers. For instance, when visiting the Holy Cross Mission in Africa, he would secure an interpreter, go over carefully all he meant to say, and have the interpreter repeat it in the vernacular to a third person, who would then rehearse the address in English to Father Huntington. What an intellectual drill!

Father Whittemore must be quoted further:

“A most impressive characteristic of our Father Founder was his capacity for work. That he accomplished an extraordinary amount, and that, despite his depth of prayer and contemplation, he was pre-eminently ‘active,’ must be evident to any one who knew him. I have something more in mind, however, than the bare fact that he put forth so much energy. The thing that struck me was his readiness—one might almost say his thirst—to put it forth.

“Nowadays, in the Order of the Holy Cross, the Assistant Superior manages the affairs of the Mother House. This sets the Superior free to concentrate his attention on the general affairs of the Order, its contacts with the life of the Church and the relations between its houses; as well as the problems and spiritual development of its individual members. The arrangement has proved itself, and some of us wonder that its advantages were not apparent to Father Huntington. It was, as a matter of fact, recommended to him. That—despite the other burdens which he carried—he chose also to distribute the mail, to superintend the housekeeping, and to regulate in person the numerous other *meticulae* of the

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monastery regime, was partly due, perhaps, to principle, but I think too that he *preferred* to do these things.

"There were occasions when one or another of us went to him with some suggested program involving much additional work both for the Father Founder himself and for others. One might think that, in view of the fact that we are always loaded almost to the breaking point, he would have weighed this fact along with the other considerations pro and con. But he never gave the slightest impression of doing so. Usually, with characteristic responsiveness to a new idea, he promptly approved the project and, if such a course gave added promise of success, suggested that he himself should write personal letters (long-hand of course) to a score of persons who might be interested!

"There was within him inexhaustible energy bursting to get forth. Partly, no doubt, this was a natural characteristic. Much more was it the fruit of his union with God. It has often reminded me of the following words of St. Teresa: <sup>1</sup>'It is to this point, my daughters, that orison tends and, in the design of God, this spiritual marriage is destined to no other purpose but the incessant production of work, work'''

These traits we have put down are all such as pertained to him as he moved among his fellows. He was rich in outgoing affections, his nature was social to a rare degree. Yet those "abyssal depths of personality" we may not explore. That marked growth in gentleness, humility, patience, which we have signalled in his later years,—was it not the index to inner disciplines, accepted in meekness, to disappointments bitter, but silently borne?

Once when he had been ill, some challenging and refresh-

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., N. Y., p. 514.

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ing secular books were lent to him, with the thought that they might be welcome. He was under obedience at the time. The books were returned unread. He had been placed on sacristy duty, four hours a day; there had been "no leisure" for such reading.

Dignity and silence marked his bearing. He knew the solitude that befits a holy soul. There was a quotation he loved and often used:

"Down to Gehenna or up to the Throne,  
He travels the fastest who travels alone."

On his lonely ascent, we may not follow him.

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## CHAPTER XIII

### *THE EXPANDING ORDER*

#### I

INTERESTING details about the new home are given in a pamphlet by Father Hughson. Written in 1904, partly with hope of gaining wider support for the venture, the pages breathe happy sense of a keenly anticipated future.

“After getting careful estimates, we have concluded that it will take fifteen thousand dollars to make the building suitable for a dwelling place. . . .

“I hope the Fathers won’t get all they want for their building; it wouldn’t be good for them.” So we heard of a friend of the Order saying recently. It would be difficult to state how entirely we agree with the speaker. It is what we have been saying to ourselves and to one and another for the past two years. Desires rise unbidden, and one can wish for more in a single minute than can be had this side of heaven. But, however wide a range our desires take, we do not forget that we are set in the narrow way of poverty, and we have no intention of wandering out of that safe and hallowed road.

“Let no one fear, then, that we expect to find ourselves in ‘a perfectly appointed establishment with all modern conveniences.’ What we are about to ask for is only enough to make the building proof against the weather, and to put into it the bare necessities of living. Some parts of it can remain unfinished for an indefinite time.”

The land,—seventy acres,—had been bought in 1899. It

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reached from the railroad on the bank of the Hudson, "eastward, over a ridge which runs parallel with the river, and then sweeps steadily down to the river's brink." Evidently, the Benedictine hope to work their farm themselves was in the mind of the Brothers. "Already," says Father Huntington, "we have set out twenty-five hundred grape-vines, and we hope in time to have eight or ten acres in vineyards." "The work, so far as we can join in it, will keep us in good health." That these pleasant anticipations were at least somewhat realized for a time appears from a letter of his in 1905, which says: "Just beginning our grape harvest; much that is very beautiful and significant about it." Alas, it proved necessary before long to abandon these ambitious ideas, as expense proved greater than receipts; but the brothers still raise vegetables for their own table, and do a good deal of canning for the winter. Meantime, careful description of the proposed building shows how sensibly it met the needs of the order, while at the same time conforming to those monastic traditions which were themselves created, not by romantic taste for the picturesque, but by the exigencies of a chosen type of life. Four chapels in the basement, "made necessary by the fact that our Rule says, 'So far as possible provision is to be made that each priest may be able to celebrate the Holy Eucharist daily.'" The main chapel: the cloister: refectory, reception room, women's gallery: library, common rooms, offices, thirty-five sleeping rooms, all of modest size. "Of plumbing," says Father Hughson, "there will be what our means will provide for." Remembering early shivering conditions at Westminster, as well as chilly stone expanses in Italy, one notes with relief that a heating plant is assumed. There was a little gatehouse, and, *mirabile dictu*, three rooms in it for women visitors.

Apart from the surrounding fields, what probably delighted Father Huntington most in these exciting plans was the wide

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and lovely view of the Hudson, from the windows of the refectory and the common rooms. Here is still the home of the Order of the Holy Cross; and hither, at Christmas and Eastertide, the far scattered Brothers return. They come back also in the summer for weeks of intimate family life including a ten-day Retreat when the sacred community-sense ripens through the fellowship of silence as in no other way. An hour's ride south of West Park, on the same side of the river, is the military school of West Point: government property, including a munitions plant. Father Hughson rightly draws attention to the dramatic contrast of the two communities. To many, a military school will seem a more natural and valuable focus of national life than the monastery. A few people, perhaps increasing in number, will graciously allow that both have a significant part to play in maintaining our civilization at its best. Here and there, an isolated individual may conceive that the two represent concepts of the human business not easy to reconcile; and may even venture to believe that the monastery will endure when the military school has vanished. But that time is not yet.

Father Huntington had always stressed the rather obvious fact that three were needed to make a community; his letters to his father before he went to Westminster note ruefully the failure to attain that end. Now slowly the tide was turning. The Order was to know gradual but sure increase during the coming years; at the time of the Father Founder's death in 1935, it numbered twenty-one professed, and two novices.

How imperfect would be our knowledge of Francis of Assisi were we not privileged to see him in relation to Brother Leo, Brother Bernard, Brother Juniper,—yes, and Brother Elias! Time has not come to study the men who gathered around Father Huntington: the elders, who helped yet perhaps restrained him during the formative years; the younger men,

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who were to know the mixed advantage and loss in entering a tradition more and more crystallized. But we may be allowed to linger a moment on the well-loved figure of "dear old Father Allen," so called, we learn, even when still a young man. A quaint and saintly figure, limited by a defect in his speech, he was portrayed by Father Tiedemann with affection, reverence, and humor, in a charming article in the *Holy Cross Magazine* for November 1934. Perhaps Father Allen suggests Brother Juniper a little. But there is a touch of Leo in him, too, and possibly of John the Simple. He was apparently more at home in choir, or in scrubbing floors, than in conducting Missions. But he shared the early days at St. Andrews, Tennessee, he was five years at Kent School; he kept the accounts of the Order beautifully; he was a ripe Hebrew scholar, and he was privileged to spend the last years before his death in 1929, in the Liberian Mission, where he was dearly loved by the native chiefs as by everybody else. He was nothing if not thorough. Before going to Liberia, he took a course in Organic Diseases which enabled him to be of the greatest use in the Mission.

Francis, like Benedict and all previous founders of religious orders, had the privilege of living in the days of an undivided Church. That privilege has ceased. No one sensitive to the forces of strong attraction drawing hither and thither within the vast complex of Christendom, can hope to escape tension and inward conflict. It must have been a great grief to the Order of the Holy Cross when, in 1909 Father Sargent, brilliant preacher, devout and ardent spirit, yielded at last to that mighty current which again and again sweeps its predestined away from the inconsistencies which are according to one's point of view either the strength or the weakness of Anglicanism, into the Roman allegiance. "My break with the members of the community caused no serious ill-feeling,"

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writes the present Monk of a (Roman) Benedictine community: "My brethren regretted it, and I had no bitterness in my heart for those I left behind. They held the fortress at West Park, and I went in good conscience to settle my affairs with Saint Peter in Rome." Memories of Father Sargent's ministry to souls during the Westminster period are still extraordinarily vital. One trusts with confident assurance that he fulfills his appointed task within that universal Church which is still and forever One to the Infinite Love contemplating "*sub specie aeternitatis*" our human anguish of divisions.

Only one other member of the O.H.C. has during the long ensuing years taken the same step. As for Father Huntington, pregnant phrases here and there in his letters suggest the sincere and searching thought on this matter known to all earnest Anglo-Catholics. "We were confidential, one with the other," writes Father Sargent. "He was not 'Pro Roman.' He at times felt the lure, acknowledged the Roman claims as coherent and almost compelling, but so far as I can recall he never pronounced himself entirely convinced, even for a time." On Dec. 11, 1909, the year in which Father Sargent left the community, Father Huntington wrote to his spiritual daughter Ellen Gates Starr, co-founder of Hull House with Jane Addams:

"I can entirely understand your state of mind and feeling, and sympathize with you in the sense of weariness and dissatisfaction and the longing for a different atmosphere. At times my whole head and heart have been with Rome. But then the thing that has given me pause was the absence of that prompting of conscience which would have made me feel that to stay would be to disappoint and disturb Our Blessed Lord. After all, the important question is not, 'Am I satisfied?' but 'Is He?'"

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Head, and heart, and conscience: an interesting distinction. Ellen Starr herself, after a painful experience of disillusion at a General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, found her peace, in 1920, in the Roman communion.

Let us, at this point, finish all we need to say about Father Huntington's attitude toward that communion, by quoting at some length a careful letter written by him to Mr. John Wheelwright, the poet, on Jan. 11, 1917:

St. Andrew's School  
St. Andrews P.O. Tenn.  
Jan. 11, 1917

What you say of your feeling as to the Roman Church does not at all surprise me. Yet I hope that you will consider the claims of Rome from several different points of view before taking any step in the way of putting yourself under instruction from Roman teachers. You are perfectly right in thinking that the Church cannot be reformed by those who cut themselves off from it, thereby explicitly assenting to all that it claims. If Rome were simply a spiritual autocracy, the question might be much simpler, but can there be any doubt that it is also a great temporal empire? The very fact that the Curia sends representatives to various secular governments seems clearly to indicate that it is itself an earthly dominion, and if so, is it not a continuation of the Caesarism of the Roman empire in ecclesiastical form? Can we who believe in democracy submit to the authority of an earthly empire? And if the Church is Christ Himself, continuing His Incarnate Life in the form of a world-wide society, what place is there for a universal ruler at Rome? Christ is not an absentee, for He is the Head of the Church, His mystical Body, on earth, in Purgatory, and in Heaven. There can be but one head to that Body, and it is not true to say that He is wholly invisible, for He is seen by the Saints in Heaven, and will at last be manifested to all His members who are alive in this world at His coming. There is one book which, in a compendious form, states this whole case clearly. It is entitled "The Church in the

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Modern State," and is written by Father Neville Figgis, who gave the Noble Lectures at Harvard a few years ago. I know you have not much time to read, but you will find a great deal in the small compass of this book.

### II

Now the Order of the Holy Cross, a corporate entity at last, entered on that long tranquil course of prayer-directed and prayer-centred activity which continues to this day. The life of the monastery, with its ordered and healthful peace and its ceaseless vigilance that doors be kept open toward Eternity, is beautifully described by Father Hughson in his little book, *An American Cloister*. He presents with appealing sympathy and poetic feeling the devotional rhythm moving, grave and sustaining, through the day and through the holy seasons; and if the irreverent modern mind is tempted to wonder where in this sternly regulated schedule are to be found the consecutive hours essential as any brain worker knows to effective intellectual or practical achievement, reminder must be given that there is no point to comment from outside. It must also be realized that the steady sequence of Offices, with the assigned periods for private meditation and devotion, are no interruption to the Fathers but are rather their chief occupation,—that "Opus Dei" which is the concentrated work of prayer.

The House exercised ceaseless and increasing hospitality, as it does to this day. If there were any doubt about the need for Religious Orders within the "Protestant" Churches, it would be dispelled by the welcome given to the Holy Cross Fathers, and the rich opportunities for service that pressed upon them. During their frequent absence from West Park, conducting Missions and Retreats, there is perforce some relaxation of the Rule; but all those profiting by their devoted ministrations

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recognized in them something setting them apart; they brought with them an unmistakable atmosphere, as of a country for which all men are homesick, consciously or not. The extent of their service within the Episcopal Church, the profound impression they made and are making within her life, effectively refute the idea that there is no place for men leading their kind of life within American Christianity. That is a silly idea; differentiation of function is needed within any living, growing body; and the tremendous value of a ministry set apart from the excellent and basic parochial system would seem obvious to common sense. Bishop Huntington's recognition of that need, at the very outset of his son's dawning vocation, was more than justified.

It was certainly the "mixed life" for which their Rule called that the Fathers led. The most active of them all, and the one most in demand, was naturally the Father Founder. He went about here, there, everywhere, in the United States. Within the orbit of the Anglican Church, not only in this country but in England, he became more and more widely known; outside that limited area he was to large degree forgotten; and one impressive thing in his story is, we say once more, his complete humility. Gone were the days of dramatic appearance before large audiences, defending some great social cause; gone the refreshing exhilaration and stimulus of a good hard fight, the contacts with outstanding enemies and friends, both vowing vigorous allegiance to one or another side in those endless conflicts in which the destinies of nations or of classes seem involved. Instead, came patient continuous devotion to deepening and purifying the interior life of those who turned to him. To this, as we have seen, he had deliberately sacrificed all other aims. When he had failed at Holy Cross Mission to enlist the enthusiasm of the boys in his parish for the Single Tax movement, he had written rather mournfully that he did

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not think his vocation meant exclusive ministering to children's clubs and to girls. Now just such ministries, largely to women, became his lot; and marvelous was the surrendered and gentle earnestness which he brought to them. His ripening spiritual wisdom enabled him actually to believe the truth to which most of us give lip-homage, that there is no small nor great with God. As compared with the crowds which had hung on his lips, the numbers he now reached were insignificant; and it did not matter to him a whit. A Mission may attract numbers relatively large, but it may almost be said that the value of a Retreat varies inversely to its size, and Father Huntington's deepest and most intensive spiritual work was henceforth to be done on a relatively small scale.

Not only in his evangelistic activities but in every detail of his daily contacts appeared the spirit shown by Him Who would now relieve the embarrassment of a host at a marriage feast, now see to it that no traveller from a distance should go hungry. Very touching is the evidence to be gleaned from his letters of the unending pains he took to help all manner of human needs, not only in that inner sphere which has excitements and romance of its own, but in the homeliest external details. He was always enlisting the aid of one or another of his spiritual children, in some form of service:

“Thank you so much for willingness to help me with regard to the lone woman on her way to Canada. As it proved you could not I think have accomplished anything by meeting her. There was a tangle, and I spent five hours at Ellis Island, on Monday, May 11, but succeeded at last in shipping her to Canada by the night train. May I send you these stamps to pay for the expense of the telephone?”

“Will you have time to do the following for me? At St. Faith's school, North Road, Poughkeepsie, New York, the girls who are graduating are writing their brief papers on the

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general topic of the special forms of service that women are rendering to society. One of them . . . is writing on the work of women in public libraries. She seems to need a little more material than she has. Could you send her some one instance or example that she could use? Don't spend more than a few minutes on it. Perhaps you have something in print that would help."

These appeals went to a librarian at Bryn Mawr College. That no group was too small to enlist his interest is evident from other letters to her, planning a Guild of students. "Even three or four would be worth while. . . . It would seem well that there be an atmosphere of religious formality rather than that of social amenity." He offers to provide speakers for the tiny group: "I could come myself three or four times." This penetration of an institution of learning seemed to him specially important; old Brynmawrters retain vivid memories of the inspiration he brought to the College.

Such details were of course incidental to his endless work of helping men and women to cleanse the windows of their souls so that Light from Beyond might stream in. To enhance and strengthen the experience of spiritual reality in our strangely secularized age was his high calling. And the response bore witness, were such needed, to the perpetual thirst for Living Water as men wander through the desert of modern life. His careful and minute preparation for every Retreat he gave puts to shame the occasional complaints of parish priests who seem to regard three or four twenty-minute sermons a week as a burden. Father Huntington was if anything too lavish with his gifts. This is a common occurrence in Retreats, where the conductor frequently calls his congregation to be alone with God, only to keep them intent on his own prolonged utterances for three long meditations a day. Difficult is the art demanded by this increasingly valued form

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of spiritual ministration. But no one who has attended Father Huntington's Retreats could fail to recognize a man who lived in the immediate Presence of God, or to realize the earnest exposition of Christian experience, the penetrating, yet sweeping exposition of the Mysteries of religion. Listening, one never thought of the form of the addresses; they were the direct, sometimes almost too ample, outpourings of a consecrated mind and heart. He liked to carry his audience both into the depths and out to the far horizons of theological assumptions. The hearer had a sense that nothing was withheld; he had been led into the *arcana* whither only a few are guided. Again and again, especially in Retreat, the sentences trembled on the verge of becoming prayer.

His frequent Retreats conducted at Adelynrood, the Community House at South Byfield, Massachusetts, of the Society of Companions of the Holy Cross, are treasures of its tradition; they have played a considerable part in revealing to this Society of Anglican women its special function and opportunity. He met with select groups, small and large, all over the United States. Interwoven with his firm treatment of theological fundamentals, and his penetration to the dangers and high possible rewards in the hidden ranges of the personal religious life, was always recognition of social sin and a ringing note of Christian radicalism. It must not be supposed for a moment that he had swerved from his former enthusiasms and convictions, however much the emphasis in his activities had changed. He was ceaselessly active, not only in Retreats but in Missions, and in those Conferences of earnest folk gathered from far and wide which are becoming, especially in summer, a prominent feature of Church life. During many years, for instance, he was one of the most beloved and valued friends of the Wellesley Conference of Church Workers, which was parent of such movements in the Episcopal Church.

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His living interest in such gatherings, his delightful sense of humour and the perfect naturalness of his behaviour, his wise guidance illumined by rich knowledge of human nature in all its queer kinks and kinds, remain a precious memory. Those frequenting such gatherings are mostly, as St. John of the Cross puts it, "the beginners." Father Huntington's intercourse with them not only possessed unfailing dignity, but imparted a rare sense of comradeship. "There is no temptation I have not known," he said to a Conference leader,—crossing and uncrossing his long legs in an habitual gesture. We gain reverent insight into his experience through outlines of his *Meditations* given to priests, many existent only in manuscript, notes often for his Retreats with his Brothers at Holy Cross.

### III

Most of the older members of the Order were similarly engaged, though some, like "dear Father Allen," stayed more at home, maintaining the life of the monastery. As for the other Fathers, they came back always for refreshment and renewal. Meanwhile, the Order was reaching out eagerly in various ways. "Many communities are founded for special work," writes Father Hughson: "One perhaps for nursing the sick, another for teaching the young, a third for preaching. The O.H.C. places before it no one such end." We know that it entered the wistful dream of Father Huntington in his youth that his Order might have been specially raised up to bring Christian reinforcement to the rising but bewildered forces making for a new social order. His own summons to such functioning had for a time seemed very clear to him; but no such thought appears to have been in the mind of his Brothers. The Order as an entity may, as Father Hughson

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says, have had no distinctive vocation; but the voice heard by one or another member called always to some form of action within the accredited monastic tradition: to missions abroad, or educational work at home.

In 1905, accordingly, St. Andrews, Sewanee, Tennessee, was founded; and, one year later, Kent School in Connecticut. Father Huntington gave his eager and joyous blessing to both enterprises, though neither of them bore direct relation to his own earlier ideals. The admirable work done by both these schools is matter of common knowledge. At long last, in 1922, the hope of missionary labors in far lands was fulfilled, and the fascinating Mission in Liberia was started. "These institutions," says Father Hughson again, "were founded without conscious movement in that direction on our part." Yet the impelling causes were obvious. Several of the Fathers had worked in the South, and were sympathetically committed to helping solve the problems of those regions. As for Kent, it satisfied a desire long intensely entertained by Father Sill, who in *The Holy Cross Magazine* for November 1934 gives a delightful account of all that led up to it. He had been straining at the leash for some time, yearning for the new venture. At last, he tells us, "Consent actually to begin the school was given by the Father Founder, then Superior of the O.H.C., in the course of a mission which he and I were conducting at Christ Church Cathedral in the city of St. Louis. It was after a hard day's work when the Father finally said, 'All right, go ahead.' . . . I had my manuscript ready, and I put it in the hands of the printer immediately, for fear that the Father Superior might change his mind!" There were two happy men.

With all these enterprises, Father Huntington kept intimately in touch. Their leaders never forgot that it was the life of the whole community which flowed through them and was

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revealed by them to their surroundings. Many letters from the Father Founder are dated from St. Andrews, where he gave close study to the sundry problems that arose. As for Kent, where hangs a fine portrait of him by Stanislas Remsky, his frequent visits there and his addresses on Prize Day were occasions of rejoicing, while his loving interest in the boys, collectively and often individually, must have been a welcome refreshment to him as advancing years tended to limit his contacts more to people at least ostensibly grown up. Correspondence between him and Father Sill in regard to the affairs both of the School and of the Order was constant, loving, and confidential, and the success of the school, both material and spiritual, was a continuous satisfaction to him.

One other phase of the Order's activities commanded his warm sympathy and collaboration. This centred in the monastery itself; it was the perhaps unique and certainly distinctive output of the Holy Cross Press. Father Huntington did not use the printed word for his vehicle as extensively as did his father the Bishop; he was rather the preacher, the missioner, the organizer. But that he could write well and effectively on occasion is evident from the essays, already discussed, which he contributed to the volume *Philanthropy and Social Progress*, published in 1894. Coming almost at the exact point when he was severing connection with secular public reforms, they may serve as his swan song as regards these interests, and any one turning to them will still find his reward. When later the Holy Cross Press was established, it offered him a natural means of publication, and through it were issued the various small books, meditations, or Outlines for meditation, which he drew up, often in collaboration with Father Tiedemann. One of these, "*Bargainers and Beggars*," we have already drawn upon; others are "*The Work of Prayer*," and "*The*

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*School of the Eternal.*" The series of tracts and pamphlets issued by Holy Cross, beginning with 1915, have been a distinct supplement to the work of the Order, in spreading knowledge of the Catholic faith, and in quickening Catholic devotion. Over fifty separate tracts have been issued; up to 1922 (last statistics available) nearly two million have been distributed, and many of them have passed through edition after edition.

The most important activity of the Press, however, has probably been *The Holy Cross Magazine*, which has lately celebrated its semi-centennial, for it was started long before the Order went to West Park. How many religious journals can boast a longer continuous history? In the Protestant Episcopal Church only *The Churchman*. A pretty illustration of the relation of the young Order to the people of Westminster is given in a letter from an old parishioner. The letter had been dwelling on the difficulties put in the way of the Order by Bishop Paret, a situation already mentioned. But the Fathers were graciously allowed, it seems, to publish *The Holy Cross Magazine*, and the letter goes on to tell how once a month the workers in the parish would meet at various houses to fold the little four-page sheet. The magazine has more than four pages now. Well it deserves the panegyric on it, contributed by the Rev. Bernard Iddings Bell:

"Both the Community and this its periodical have had during the past half century a significance for the Church in general even larger than they possessed for those who have lived within successive cloisters and have gone out from them knowing the peace and power of Jesus Christ. . . . The magazine has faithfully reflected all these years the ideas, purposes and faith of the Order itself, even as the Order has exemplified the concept of monasticism in terms of a free and liberal

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Catholicism which grew into maturity along with the developing life of James Huntington its Founder.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Leicester Lewis says in a brief article: “The purpose of this journal was to be positive not negative; it was to present and portray the values of that religion of which the foundation of the O.H.C. was a brilliant expression.” He continues, stressing the broad inclusiveness of the Catholic faith as opposed to the partial and fragmentary character of Protestantism: “It was as an expression of this wholeness of Christianity that the Order of the Holy Cross was founded. It was as missionary for this ecumenical religion that *The Holy Cross Magazine* was created.”<sup>2</sup>

“*Crux est Mundi Medicina*”; such will always remain the motto of the Order, and the magazine. Father Huntington must have been proud of the little organ, its wide range of articles both scholarly and popular, its appeal to both thought and devotion, its good book reviews and musical surveys, and not least, its surprising wealth of choice illustration drawn largely from the treasures which have come into this country, of early religious art. Contributions from him often appeared in its columns, and always, as Dr. Bell pointed out, it has reflected his own attitude: “Catholic, devotional, pastoral, and unafraid.”

## IV

How could so few men—for the Order continued to grow slowly—carry on all these enterprises, with spirit and success? Through the grace of God, doubtless. But it was not Father Huntington’s way to ignore the possible aid to that grace in his own efforts to build up the community. All down the

<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Cross Magazine*, Jan. 1939, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

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years, especially in the first quarter of the century, the encouragement of vocations was one of his great concerns. His grave conviction and his method of approach are evident in a letter written by him in 1915, which shall be quoted here in its entirety: he had just entered on one of his recurrent periods as Superior of the Order. The First World War had been, as may be noted, in process for over a year:

Holy Cross, West Park, New York  
November 6, 1915

My dear brother:

When I became Superior of our community two months ago, a large amount of correspondence was handed me by my predecessor in office. Among these letters was one from you, dated November 3rd, 1913. In it you make some enquiries about our Community, and imply that you have, at times at any rate, had some thought of making trial of the Religious Life.

I do not know just what information was given you, or if you felt that your questions were satisfactorily answered. And, of course, I do not know what is your present state of mind.

But two things are very clear to me. One is that the needs of the Church in our time and land cry loudly for the increase of Religious Communities, for the devotion to God in the Religious Life of numbers of men, both laymen and priests. The other is that, if a man has received from God the high privilege of entering a Religious Community, he does himself a very great,—probably an irreparable,—injury, and injustice, if he lightly turns away from it.

Will you let me say a word to you in regard to both these points?

1. THE NEEDS OF THE CHURCH. Consider what responsibility rests upon the Church in this country. It is nothing less than the conversion of America to the Catholic faith, the uniting of all the divided sections of this great nation in a common belief in God, and a common effort to carry out

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His Will, as He has made and is making it known. This, I say, is the responsibility of the Church in relation to the American nation, and to the whole world. You are a member of the Church. The responsibility rests on *You*. What are you going to do about it? What contribution have you to make? God may have made it plain to you that His plan for you is that you should marry and bring up a family of children to serve Him, and to work for the Church and for the country. He may have called you yourself to be a lawyer, a doctor, a soldier, (sic), a merchant, a sailor, an engineer. If so, well and good. But if you have no such definite call as would preclude your entering a Religious Community, then is it not at least likely that it is in such an association that you can do the best for your Church and your country? In how many enterprises men are realizing the power and effectiveness of combination! Men join together to mine coal, to build railroads, to manufacture automobiles, to publish books, to slaughter their fellow-men.

Is it only work for God, work for souls, work for the highest interests of humanity, in time and eternity, which shall continue to be done by isolated individuals, in hap-hazard, hand-to-mouth ways, with no concerted action, no thought-out plans, no economy of effort, no leadership or statesmanlike action? For God's sake, let's get together!

2. THEN YOUR OWN NEEDS. You were created for union with God, to know Him, to love Him, to share His life now and forever. To fulfil that purpose, for which you exist, you must strive to be like God, as He revealed Himself in Jesus Christ. You must aim at perfection, to be perfect as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect. That means hard work. Can you do it better alone, or with others to help you? When Our Lord was on earth, many people listened to Him and tried to do as He said. But to some His call was, "Follow Me." He chose some to be with Him, to live as He lived, to be strong against the world by sharing His poverty, joyful by having His friendship in a life of chastity, free by giving up their own wills in loving obedience to Him, ready to go anywhere and do anything at His bidding. Christ still calls some to "vow

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perfection" by promising to follow Him in poverty, chastity, and obedience. Is He not calling you? Is there any other way in which you can be sure of "acquiring perfection," of attaining to God and having Him as your portion forever? Of course it is a hard life, in some respects the very hardest. To get up before five o'clock every morning, to live on the rations given you with no choice as to your food, to pray, in chapel or in your cell, four times a day, to work under orders, to go where you are sent, to do as you are told whether you like it or not, to bear humiliation, to fast, to be ridiculed by the world, and to keep on at all this as old age arrives, and to die in harness at the end,—this is not an easy life. But is it a harder life than Jesus Christ lived? And isn't it true that those who live it wouldn't exchange it for anything the world can give, that it is they who keep their freshness and elasticity, who have brightness in their eyes, a smile on their lips, warmth in their hearts? Is it not they who see the fruits of their sacrifices in the salvation and sanctification of other souls?

At any rate, don't play fast and loose with a call to be an intimate friend of Jesus Christ. If you believe He wants you in the ranks of the Religious Life, make up your mind once for all, and come as soon as He opens the way. If not, do whatever else He has for you, and may He bless and help you to do it with all your might. We shall continue to have you in our prayers.

Faithfully in our B. Lord,

James O. S. Huntington

Superior O.H.C.

This letter speaks for itself. It is interesting to note that the recipient became,—alas, only for a time—a member of the Order. But Father Huntington never tried to coerce the will of another or to dictate to the Lord. In the fine phrase of Father Baker, he sought always "to sanctify people in accordance with their nature." And he possessed in rare degree the power to combine vigorous initiative with a complete humility, in acceptance of results.





## CHAPTER XIV

### *THE PASSING YEARS*

#### I

MORE than once, pressing invitations came to Father Huntington to accept responsibilities elsewhere. Quite early, in the later Nineties, a letter to his father shows that there was some talk of a Bishopric; he rejected the idea with decision. In June 1902, the parish records of the Church of the Advent, Boston, tell that on the death of Father William Frisbie, Father Huntington was asked to become rector, provided that satisfactory arrangements could be made with his Order. The careful wording of this proviso recalls the difficult experience through which the parish had passed twenty years earlier, when its then rector, Father—later Bishop—Grafton had withdrawn from the S.S.J.E. The Advent had been the centre of the Catholic revival in New England; but at this juncture controversy rent the parish in two, and more than half its members left to form the new parish of St. John the Evangelist on Bowdoin Street, under the care of the former assistant rector, Father A. C. A. Hall. When later, in connection with the election of Phillips Brooks to the Bishopric of Massachusetts, Father Hall, who was supporting him, was recalled to England (to become presently Bishop of Vermont), it became fairly evident that Father Huntington's instinct was sound, in establishing the Order of the Holy Cross on a basis independent of control from across the sea. Nor was plain sailing sure if the rector of a great city parish was

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bound to any Order whatsoever. No wonder that The Advent at this point worded its invitation warily. Father Huntington must have realized the importance of the call, for he delayed his refusal two full months; the question was under consideration from July to September.

The Order as a whole had similar decisions to make. We know how need to concentrate on its primary ends had led it at the outset to withdraw from the pressing demands of life among New York tenements to the peace of Westminster. About ten years later, the Bishop of Chicago offered his Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul to the Order. Father Dolling, who was in America at the time, put his view of the situation succinctly: "It would be fine for the Cathedral," said he, "but it would kill your Order." Alas that an Order like an individual is unable to do more than one thing at a time. Bound by the limitations of mortal life, both alike must be racked by the misery of living at once in the temporal and the eternal.

Father Huntington's central devotion never swerved from Holy Cross, and the focus of his life was the community at West Park. Yet several independent enterprises claimed his allegiance down the years. Two or three meant so much to him that they call for special note. First we may recall Cail, to which he was always loyal, and which was perhaps more obviously akin than any of his other interests to his old zeal for organized labor and social reform. Then light falls steadily on his close relations with St. Faith's, a home for wayward girls founded in 1897 and located first in Hartford, later in Tarrytown on the Hudson. It has been said that St. Faith's meant almost as much to him as the Order and it is certainly true that he, more than anyone else, started such work for girls as that house represented in the Episcopal Church. We remember how as a very young priest he had ventured when a House of Refuge was proposed in Boston, to oppose an apparently

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rather sentimental approach by Phillips Brooks, with remarks showing keen practical understanding of the problems involved. This early episode makes all the more striking his liberal conception of the policy of such a centre, as compared with the stricter and more authoritarian views of his sister Arria. He was long the guiding influence at St. Faith's and he always favored granting to the girls an unwonted degree of freedom.

The Head of the House was a very unusual woman, Miss McGhee. She early became an invalid, but continued from a bed of pain to rule this house of unmarried mothers, some of them not more than twelve years old. Father Huntington was daring in his adventure. He believed characteristically that the primary thing these girls needed was to be trusted. Houses of the Good Shepherd in which Arria Huntington was interested, were out in the country in secluded locations, sometimes with walls around them. Not so St. Faith's. "On a main thoroughfare, in a town as big as Tarrytown, no locks except the ordinary lock on the front door which could easily be opened from within, these girls lived with their babies. It was the girls who answered the door when visitors came. From the very start they had to meet the postman, the baker, the butcher. They were sent out on errands into the town. Everybody knew what St. Faith's was, and about the girls. But they were taught to meet the world and to face it, not to run away from it." Another example of Father Huntington's habitual attitude; confidence in those whom the world distrusted.

In many private letters to Miss Henrietta Lake, who was also long and closely connected with St. Faith's, Father Huntington speaks of one or another individual; always with touching tenderness and solicitude. His visits to the House were frequent, his ministry to it unsparing. In one letter he speaks

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with deep and delicate emotion of his belief that the years in this House were often the happiest these girls were ever to know, even though they were restored to normal life.

“I am afraid that, for some of the girls their years at St. Faith’s is the one bright interlude in their lives, even though it is not without its shadow of shame and regret and apprehension. Their early life was, probably, in a sordid household, with insufficient food, and they get out to marry often very unhappily and struggle along in poverty and ill-health. Few of them have happy homes. Yet scarcely any of them go down into sin and misery, and a good many from time to time come back for a brief visit at St. Faith’s, buoyant and brave. I am writing to some fifty of those who are communicants to encourage them to make their Easter Communion.”

His earnest wish to have the worship of the Church reveal to these girls its full beauty and its depth of meaning, is manifest in a later letter to another friend of the House, after the death of Miss McGhee:

“The custom is to take the veil off the cross on the altar at three o’clock on Good Friday, open the door of the tabernacle and let it stand open and remove all candlesticks and altar coverings—at least that is what might be done at St. Faith’s. The stripped altar is very impressive as figuring the cross on Mount Calvary, after our blessed Lord’s Body had been taken down. Two unbleached wax candles could be put on for evensong Friday night. They will be all that are needed for the Mass Saturday morning, but of course the altar linen will be put back for Mass.

“It might be well to have the girls who do not go to Church between twelve and three on Good Friday keep silence. My girls at Holy Cross used to try to do this in the factories where they worked. It would be well to have some devo-

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tions—such as the Litany of the Passion on page 16 in the book of Litanies at a little before three.

“You will see, of course, that in these suggestions I am trying to see how we can carry on the tradition at St. Faith’s now that the influence of Miss McGhee is no longer to be counted on there. We must, I think, fall back upon what has been tried and tested by the Church and found helpful.”

Father Whittemore also speaks of his “devotion to the girls at St. Faith’s House, carried on to the end of his life.” “Week after week he visited them, and the care with which he prepared his instructions was as painstaking as though intended for the faculty of a university.” A beautiful illustration of his attitude is added:

“One day he received a letter from an old St. Faith’s girl who had been transferred to a state institution in Letchworth Village. She said that she had had no opportunity to make her communion for a long time. Thereupon Father Huntington went by train to the station nearest to Letchworth, and walked several miles the rest of the way, carrying a heavy bag, and gave the girl her communion. This was not enough for him, however. He continued his visits, with the result that several other girls became interested, and eventually out of this faithful pastorate for a single soul there developed a work which the Order carried on at Letchworth for many years and which ultimately brought us into touch with many hundreds of mentally deficient boys and girls.”

However personal the work of a Holy Cross Father, it is always likely to find reinforcement through the corporate life of the Order.

It was this life-long concern with the saddest possible aspect of the life of women which led to his initiation of one of the most fecund and enduring works to which he dedicated

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his powers: The Church Mission of Help. This was founded in 1911 at his suggestion. He was honorary vice-president of the New York branch from that time until his death, though he delegated to others the privilege of personal contact with the girls; the name was given by him, and he wrote the two prayers for it. In 1921 he wrote with his usual humility to Mrs. John Glenn, the President, referring to an article<sup>1</sup> by her in *The Spirit of Missions*: "I feel much honored that you should have referred to me by name; I simply passed on to Dr. Manning what had come to me in conversation with Miss McGhee." This is doubtless true, for his debt to that consecrated woman is one he was always keen to acknowledge; but the C.M.H. in its development bears the imprint of his own wise and searching thought, always looking behind effects to causes. To his mind, the Society is less a form of philanthropy than an act of expiation: So he writes in the "Closing Message" for the Report of 1914-15:

"Correct ideas are gradually finding place, but to a large extent the Church Mission of Help is still regarded as a form of 'philanthropy,' of 'charity.' Such a view may be gratifying to our complacency and self-approval; but . . . we ought to rise to a sterner and truer attitude. More and more it becomes plain that those to whom we minister . . . are not nearly so responsible for injuries done to society as society is responsible for cruel wrong done to them. It is not these poor girls who are most to blame. We ourselves are the actual 'offenders'; the girls are, many of them, only the victims of our neglect and injustice, of the false standards we have set up, and the debasing or disheartening conditions we have suffered to persist. . . . The questions raised by the work of the Church Mission of Help go down to the roots of our social life. We

<sup>1</sup> "Church Mission of Help," by Mary Willcox Glenn, May, 1921.

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shall never find their solution unless we are prepared to face the truth at any cost."

In such a passage sounds the note of the friend of Henry George. It is a note echoed by Mrs. Glenn in the article already mentioned, when she says that the CMH calls on Church people "to face meditatively and sacrificially the whole task involved in the restoring of individual broken lives." "The whole task involved!" It is a sweeping demand. But this attitude in a highly specialized Society is surely a reason for the common recognition of the CMH as one of the wisest and most constructive activities of the Episcopal Church.

His original hope had been for a wider scope to the Society. At the meeting at Trinity Rectory in New York, in 1911, when the work was first organized, the question rose as to whether it "was to be confined to wayward girls." In reply, Father Huntington said that "it was to extend to all needing assistance," and spoke of "discharged convicts as among those who would need to be reached through its agency." This hope was not to be fulfilled; but within its self-imposed limits, the Society must have been a constant comfort and satisfaction to him. It has risen far above that level of the sentimental amateur which he regarded with mournful if courteous distaste. Looking back on his early years, in an unusual mood of candor, he wrote pungently in the organ of the Society, *The Messenger*, in 1924: "I must confess that more than once in those years, I lost heart, and felt that rescue work would never be more than a makeshift, carried on by an occasional saint, helped (or hindered) by an ever-changing procession of women who had failed to find their place elsewhere, and who had turned to rescue work as a pis-aller. . . . I used to wonder at this. . . . At times the whole matter, viewed from the point of view of the Christian mysteries, filled me with something

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deeper than perplexity, and brought a shadow of doubt and despair.

"It calls forth, then, an immense resurgence of hope and confidence to know that the Church Mission of Help, spreading rapidly as it is across the country, is stirring the hearts of women, especially of women in their early years, with a vision of splendid service to be done not only in rescue homes but in the wide field of society at large."

In the 25th Annual Report of the CMH, dated 1935, the following statement by Bishop Manning was printed on the back of the cover:

"The Church Mission of Help owes its foundation, under God, to the faith and the loving vision of Father Huntington, and the work of the Society illustrates those ideals of faith and service to which his whole life was given."

## II

It is impossible to dwell on all this interest in work for women without recalling the long and loving sympathy between himself and his sister Arria. The thought leads back naturally to the continuous closeness and intimacy of his family relations, all down the years. He had written tenderly to his aunt in the first flush of dedicated passion, that though he should be separated from his loved ones in the flesh, the spiritual tie would never weaken. But really, he was no more separated from them outwardly than most grown men are from their relatives. Mrs. Sessions tells charmingly how, in the New York days, when she and her husband were living in Englewood, he would run out to them for a rest. "One midnight, when the little house was wrapped in the silence of the dark surrounding woods, they heard the low whistling of a hymn tune composed years before by the sister, and only

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known to the family. She knew it was hers, and for the next twenty hours he slept in their little guest room, waking the next evening and going back to his work through the cool night air. His occasional vacations at Forty Acres were always times of joy. The boys sought his advice, listened with delight to his good stories, and loved to find solutions to the riddles and puzzles he propounded. For the elders, there was the large loose bag which he always carried, abnormally heavy because of the travelling library it contained. Out of it came every variety of book: history, fiction, essays, scientific and other, the newest issue of publishers. He loved to quote from these, usually to his sisters, and to bring them into family discussion."

We can well believe the statement as we realize the wealth of quotation scattered through his private letters: from Browning—newly discovered in the early century,—from Francis Thompson, from Kipling, Chesterton, whom you will. Mrs. Sessions concludes, concerning those visits: "There would always be in these vacation times a celebration of the Holy Eucharist on an early morning, at one or another of the two old houses. Even little children were present at these times."

Many are the allusions in his letters, now happy, now a little wistful, showing his loyal affection for that sweet and pleasant land in which the family life had been rooted for so many generations. He writes, for instance, on Easter Monday, 1900: "Make a bow for me to Mt. Holyoke, Mt. Tom, Mt. Sugarloaf, Mt. Toby,—in fact you might make a circular bow to the horizon in general. It is all well known and dear to me.

"Now walk straight forward in the Easter light."

Again he writes: "Hadley, Aug. 30, 1912. I am here for a week with my two unmarried sisters, in this charming little cabin they have built on this breezy ridge, in a real old New England pasture, grown up with birch trees and sweet fern.

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We take our meals and spend our days on the front porch, (7 by 13 feet), looking down on the Connecticut valley and the hills beyond." Four years later, in July 1916, a long theological letter to a Harvard boy, written obviously with a restful sense of ample leisure, opens: "I am here . . . for a brief visit to my two unmarried sisters in their little cabin on this eminence looking out on the Connecticut valley and off to the mountain beyond. We are on an almost disused road, in the middle of an old berry-pasture, now grown up with birch-trees which nearly close us in."

The charming little hidden cabin still stands, and the birch trees are still there.

Father Huntington was President of the Huntington Association from 1912 to 1927. "We in this organization do not need any proof of my uncle's love and devotion to the wider group of the Family," said his nephew Dr. James Huntington in 1937,<sup>1</sup> "for it was he as President that brought the Association to the zenith of its activities by his yearly luncheons in New York and the marvelous Fourth Reunion held . . . fifteen years ago. Those of us who were here on that occasion remember his radiant presence, and his wonderful address at the dinner when he described the characteristics of the Huntington family." What did he emphasize in that address, one wonders? Was it that piquant combination of independence and loyalty which we spoke of at the outset of this book?

Certainly, such combination obtained in his own immediate family. One, despite surface differences, in their fundamental Christian faith, they were also one in their adventurous and unconventional passion for social justice, a passion which at times led them into such enterprises that they might almost have been called the "scofflaws" of their day. His fellowship with his sisters on these lines had sustained him from his early

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

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youth; not only Arria but Ruth was keen in uniting herself with advanced reform movements, and while he quickened their ardors it is sometimes hard to distinguish his initiative from theirs. Dearest of all to him was his absolute unity on these lines with his father; and here we may perceive that as the years went on, the initiative was often his. Bishop Huntington was always courageous and independent in attitude; he was always deeply moved by problems of human brotherhood, swift to respond to any noble cause; but, says Arria Huntington in her Memoirs, "a closer attention to the problems involved in present social conditions came about partly through his son."

Never was there a more ideal relation between child and parent than that existing between these two.

"My own father passed from this world twelve years ago," he wrote in a letter of condolence of 1916, "but the sense of loss is still with me."

A letter from Westminster in the Nineties testifies to his feeling:

"My dear father: This ought to reach you in time for me to wish you many blessings on your birthday. More and more precious to me every year seem the relations of the family and the home, more and more do I realize that any knowledge I may have of God came to me first because I had a father and that you were that father. For this and for all else that has come to me through you I ask God's benediction on your birthday."

To trace the sympathetic coöperation between father and son is a pleasant task. Bishop Huntington became till his death President of the Cail, which his son had helped to found, and also of the Christian Social Union. And despite his early humorous hesitations over "Jamie's" Catholic tendencies, the fundamental union was complete. Father Huntington preached

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the sermon at the Golden Wedding anniversary of his parents in 1894; it was a grief that Bishop Huntington, advanced in years, could not be present at the dedication of the West Park Monastery ten years later. But Mrs. Huntington, Arria, and George shared the joy of that occasion. Within a few months, the relation between son and father entered a new phase, when Bishop Huntington died on July 11, 1904, in his eighty-fifth year, preceding by only two hours his eldest son. James had been with his father during the last illness, though he could not attend the funeral.

The beloved mother lived till 1910, and repeated allusions in private letters show his tender solicitude. This is especially marked in letters mentioning a proposed visit to Europe, whither he was bound for a stay of considerable length in various Religious houses, especially those of S.S.J.E., in 1906:

“What will you think when I tell you that I expect to sail for England Nov. 7 to spend the winter visiting Religious Houses there. Will you remember me on the great and wide sea, and also ask that, if it be God’s blessed Will, I may find my mother alive when I return. I had week before last in Syracuse, and found her wonderfully bright and well.” He found her well on his return, and wrote in 1910: “Thank you very much for your letter of Feb. 12 and the one you wrote after hearing of my mother’s death. I shall be glad to pray for your dear father. I trust that you will have the joy in coming back to his welcome as I did to find my mother’s greeting ready for me.” In the summer of 1909, Mrs. Huntington became gravely ill. “I am remembering Mrs. Owens in my prayers. Will you, on your part say a prayer for my dear mother? She is eighty-six years old, and has seemed wonderfully strong and bright until three weeks ago. A distressing cough has pulled her down. She seems to be gaining. We are so grateful for having had her all these years that we hardly

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dare ask her longer—yet, if it might be!” The cough increased, and the end was feared. On July 22nd her son was sent for. “The next day was to be his birthday, and they knew that he would be anxious to administer the sacrament to her, and that it would be an unspeakable comfort to them both. Dr. and nurse were apprehensive, however, lest the exertion would not be wise. But at seven in the morning, as she seemed calm, it seemed best to begin the service. The family started along the road, the two smallest boys begging to go. The sun was shining in the West Room on the conscious but motionless figure lying among the pillows, and upon the little table with its candlesticks and cross, where her opening eyes might see it, and her son in his vestments.

“To the amazement of the worshippers, when the creed was reached, their mother’s voice suddenly rang out, strong and firm, though her eyes were closed, repeating every word. She was able to receive the Bread and Wine, and lay with a peaceful expression on her face during the closing prayers, joining in every Amen. No cough, no struggle for breath. After the little company rose from their knees, she looked up with a smile.

“‘James,’ she said, ‘this is your birthday, isn’t it? I have a gold piece put away for you. Look in the little drawer of my sewing table. I am so glad you could be here.’

“The nurse could hardly believe her ears. The doctor almost refused to credit the report. But when he left he agreed that there was a fairly miraculous change in her condition. Most surely a good thing that passed man’s understanding. She was restored to health and went back to Syracuse with renewed strength. A short illness during the following February ended in her death, but there was never a return of the cough.”

Many years later, in 1927, Father Huntington wrote to a friend whose mother was dying: “I feel that I can under-

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stand, in some measure at least, what you are going through. I recall my own experience, when, one summer many years ago, my own mother was very ill. She recovered, but only lived a few months longer. Some lingering sense of childhood seems to pass, not to return, when one can no longer say 'Mother' in the old familiar sense, and receive a reply."

The three sisters still lived, and a time came when he sorely needed their tender ministries. For, after a long siege of fever which had left him in a sadly depressed condition, both mentally and spiritually, it was decided to send him for his convalescence to his two sisters Arria and Mary at Syracuse. This was a difficult passage; the only period recorded in his long and healthful life when he knew, or at least when he revealed to others, such descent into darkness as the saints may know. Mrs. Sessions writes:

"He had become in his weakened nervous condition the victim of that devastating fear—fear of disease and lingering death—which had at times attacked other members of the family. A gripping terror, seemingly unconquerable, had taken possession of his mind and will. Reading with him, amusing him, or supplying visitors, all failed to rouse him from his seeming lethargic attitude. He described it afterward as a state of mind only comparable to Our Saviour's Agony in Gethsemane. Faith did not seem to help; how could one know but that the dreaded disaster might be God's Will? One could not even pray naturally; fasting was all too easy and eating an effort. . . . The sisters were almost in despair. . . . As health came slowly back, however, and interest in the surrounding world was aroused, little by little his mental attitude grew more normal, and he finally emerged his own bright and hopeful self, fully aware of the depth of the cloud, and believing it a part of his training in endurance, faithfulness, and sympathy for the sorrowful and discouraged."

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That account, unique in all records of Father Huntington, describes an experience as seen from the outside. What this experience meant inwardly, we may not seek to fathom. But there is a certain relief in learning that, for all his splendid sanity and his outgoing selflessness, he was not immune, but was called to explore that path of personal anguish which, sooner or later, every man of God must tread.

We learn that his sister Mary became especially near and dear to him at that time. His tender feeling to her was shown during her prolonged last illness, from 1928 to 1936. He wrote her every single day: "Always, even after a mental weakening which rendered her helpless to enter into his interests, she thought and spoke of him continually, and his picture, hung in sight of her bed, was the one object sought by her dim eyes to the last." There is a touching little appendix to this story. Dr. James Huntington tells us that Father Huntington did not consider it consistent with his vow of personal poverty to pay the two and three cents postage on these letters out of the community fund; so he asked his only too willing nephew kindly to supply the money. To this same nephew and namesake we owe many details, and he was privileged to attend on Father Huntington's death-bed.

Arria Huntington, like Mary, knew years of mental failure before her death, and deep was the sorrow of her brother. . . . Heavy is the toll of love.

### III

It is pleasant to turn from these annals of sorrow, to the wholesome joys known by Father Huntington till the very end of his life. Outstanding among them was his feeling for natural beauty. He was obviously no "Bluedomer". His best refreshment came through the glorious liturgy of the Church.

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The ritual which enshrines that Catholic worship perpetuating down the ages an exhilarating experience of beauty at its highest and most consecrate, was observed with reverent scholarship and zealous care at Holy Cross, and the Father Founder was watchful over every detail. But at the same time, how he did love out-of-doors! Probably his zest for it had been enhanced by long residence among the slums of New York. Brief notes here and there scattered through his letters fairly sing with delight: "Father Sill and I slept in the new building last night. It was beautiful; the full moon across the broad river." "Thanks for the photograph; it stirs my blood. How the waves must come tumbling in on those rocks when the winds are loosed, and the 'bull-necked breakers flee'!" "The great North-West is a wonderful country." "I went up the Cheyenne canon last Saturday, and through the Garden of Eden, and had glorious vision of Pike's peak and other sublimities."

Sundry trips in Europe as well as in this country brought him refreshment. He never went as a tourist; these trips usually meant arduous toil, and were always undertaken with some definite purpose. But travel is twice as sweet if undertaken with some object besides having a good time. He writes to Ellen Starr in 1910 about a proposed visit of hers to Italy, urging her to stop at Monte Cassino and on no account to miss the Carceri at Assisi, regretting that he did not get to La Verna, or to Siena. In the autumn of 1923 came the fulfilment of a long desire, as he actually visited the Holy Cross Mission in Liberia. "He never tired talking of the grandeur of the tropical forest through which he walked, sixty miles, declining bearers; and great was his pride in the work of the Mission."

Other satisfactions than those afforded by nature and travel were not denied him. His Order, as well as he, must have been

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gratified when just before he went to Liberia, at the great Anglo-Catholic Congress in London, July 1923, he was chosen to make the opening address. Although as a speaker, he is said, as we have already noticed, to have been less eloquent than his father, he was none the less one of the best known and most distinguished preachers of America in his day. He and the other members of his Order naturally took comfort in their fellowship with like-minded men in England, where Anglo-Catholic faith and practice were gaining stronger and stronger influence during these years. The English leaders were often welcomed at Holy Cross; and more than once, as in 1907, Father Huntington went to England with the avowed purpose of forming connections at Cowley and elsewhere. He made warm friends; among them may be mentioned, in his early years, George John Romanes, a man whom he must, one thinks, have found particularly congenial. But he never wavered in his first conviction that the revival of the Religious Life in the United States must follow distinctive lines of its own.

What contacts he had with spiritual currents or outstanding personalities apart from the Anglican communion in America is hard to determine. His interest and activity now centred in the little community at West Park, or flowed from there. He was living and working to the extent of his powers within the area of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and as we have said, it does not appear that either at this period or earlier he knew intimacy with such religious leaders as, for instance, Walter Rauschenbusch, or even, in his own communion, that profound thinker and noble spirit, Henry Nash, author of *The Genesis of the Social Conscience*: men, all of them, who were furthering that alliance of Christianity with the forces of reform in which he had played so leading a part. Nor did he seemingly have any contact with Roman Catholics, in the United States or elsewhere. The invisible and tragic barrier

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which relentlessly prevents any free flow of thought between this communion and other disciples of a common Lord, was even more impenetrable then than it is now.

Time marched on according to its wont; the World War came and went. (Or rather let us say the first phase of that apocalyptic catastrophe.) Memory survives of the deep and solemn power of Father Huntington's preaching during this ordeal. Three members of the Order and one postulant were released for war service, and made fine records; Father Whitall, for instance, was cited for good work at a hospital in Limoges. The anguish of the times was fully shared at Holy Cross. A Litany of Intercession was said every day, as well as a Mass with special intention; and long days of Retreat were given to prayers of Expiation, and to intercession for all nations and for all the victims of war.

The sad subsequent movement of events, comprising the Treaty of Versailles, the formation of the League of Nations, the frustration and collapse of Wilson, finds no record in their annals of the Order or in the life of Father Huntington. The decision to abstain from partizanship and from activity in political and public matters seems to have been very thoroughly observed, by him and by the Brothers. He wrote to an English friend: "The President of the U.S.A. has issued a proclamation, instructing us not to express ourselves as condemning the people of *any nation* with which we are in friendly relations."

That decision was wise perhaps. Their concern was with values that abide. Yet it is impossible not to wonder whether Father Huntington's aloofness from secular matters were not exposed to an acid test during those tremendous and searching years. It was somewhat later that he was reported to have said that he was thankful he never had preached in favor of America's entering the war.



## CHAPTER XV

### *PERSONAL ALIGNMENTS*

#### I

**T**HERE may be significance in a negation. The very absence of more positive reactions to the World War on Father Huntington's part invites us to pause. In 1914, he was just entering on his seventh decade, and the time is ripe for reflecting on his mature alignments in the religious and the social sphere.

Those war years marked in more ways than one a division between epochs. They were the signal for two special issues to rise to the surface in the religious world. These issues were not new, but they became during the next quarter century, central as never before in the Christian thinking of America. They are with us still, increasingly pressing, increasingly clamorous. One is of course Pacifism, more and more stormily debated in the Churches, and in all the circles of youth. The other, in some ways closely allied, in others diametrically opposed, is Communism: an issue with various phases, involving ultimately the Christian attitude toward any revolutionary change, and in its more immediate aspects the urgent question of the United Front, and the legitimate relation of Christian individuals or groups toward secular forces or movements. Neither of these issues seems to have disturbed Father Huntington.

A third issue has risen now: that of the so-called democracies against the Totalitarian States. It was already lowering on the horizon at the time of Father Huntington's death, when in

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1935 he passed "to where, beyond these voices, there is peace"; but it had not yet overcast the sky as it has today. The Christian reaction toward War, forced on men by events, and the attitude toward Communism, forced on them by the Russian challenge, were the problems that ploughed into their souls. With these tumultuous concerns, dominant in the seeking mind of Christian youth, and more and more so in the mind of the Churches; with the new movements and organs through which they find expression, Father Huntington seems seldom or never to have occupied himself. This means that his figure dates. It belongs quite distinctly to the Pre-War epoch, which is already passing into the perspective of history.

As we look back over the thirty years intervening between his religious profession in 1884 and the outbreak of the World War, we discern a steady consistency. Dramatic change had led him from noisy New York to West Park with its large silences; from the life of a prominent social crusader to the concentration of effort on intensive hidden work for souls, and on the upbuilding of his Order. But two lights all this time shone unfaltering in his inward sanctuary: devotion to the Catholic faith, and—derivative, but unflickering—devotion to the cause of social justice. Nor till the end of his earthly days did either light grow dim. But the special convictions and attitudes to which they had committed him call for further consideration.

His constant devotion to the Church, synonymous in his mind with the Catholic Body needs no demonstration. His very withdrawal from activity in social reform, and the dedication of all his later life to her direct service, witnesses to it. If evidence is needed to prove his loyalty to that other major interest which had seemingly retired into the background, such can be abundantly found in his private correspondence. So he

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writes to Ellen Starr, during these pre-war years: (she was of course, with Jane Addams, in the very centre of the social struggle)

Thank you for writing me of Power and Rudowitz; I had been away from home, and very busy, and did not know of their danger. I am praying for them, our brothers, and that the nation we love may not betray their trust in her profession of liberty and justice.

I trust that in spite of the vast sorrows and calamities of the world, this blessed Feast is bringing you peace and joy in the birth of our Redeemer from sin and death, from cruelty and wrong. What begins within our gaze in the Manger of Bethlehem, can not end; it must find consummation in the City of God, foursquare about the victorious Son of Man, as its centre and stay.

Lovingly in Him,

Again, later in the same season:

We have indeed come on troublous times, but "The Lord sitteth above the water floods" of human passions and wilfulness, and "remaineth a king forever," to which all nations must at last submit, all forms of lawlessness and greed.

I do not know Gorky's book; I have within reach "The Turn of the Balance," to read after Easter.

Could you let me know the particular origins of lawlessness that meet your attention? Or possibly you can do more for me than that alone. I am under engagement to conduct the Three Hours Service at Old Trinity, New York. I want to make the message reach to some larger issues than those of the individual life, (without of course ignoring those). I imagine that the modern problems of social disorder are more palpable and evident in Chicago than in New York. Perhaps you can just write these down. Of course I don't mean describe them, but indicate them by a phrase.

Your name is in my prayers every night.

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Again—April 7, 1908:

What you write is illuminating and solemnizing. I had not realized that the shadow of the Man on Horseback (or is it a covered automobile?) is falling upon us. May we have the spirit of our fathers to fight for freedom for the poor and oppressed.

A year later he sends her a copy of *The Survey*—an organ he seems to have read regularly,—with a book including an article by Jeffrey Brackett, outlining the possible fields of social reconstruction in which the Church, “by which he seems to mean the general body of active members in Christian religious organizations,” might function. “The book is not profound, but presents a rather pleasant fancy of a socialist revolution more or less inspired by Christianity.” To find him using the word “socialists” with a friendly connotation is worth quoting, because unusual.

He writes to a Companion of the Holy Cross in 1909: “I have heard something of the Conference, and I am sure that it was worth while. And I pray daily for the opening of opportunities,—which means the abolition of privilege. It is one of the blessings of prayer that one can be sure that no effort is wasted if one is asking that God’s Will be done.”

Memory of talks a good deal later, toward the very end of his life, at Adelynrood, underline the impression of a certain sustained eagerness, perhaps a little troubled and wistful, in attempts to follow the swift onward sweep of social speculation. For, as has been said, his natural outlook rather antedated the War.

But it would be a mistake if we gave the impression that he was not moved by that world-shaking event. There is a report of a Good Friday address, during one of those war years, stern

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and solemn in power. He was preacher at Trinity on the day that war was declared. He said later that never before had he felt so sure that he was inspired.

### II

Was Father Huntington liberal or conservative? After the letters just quoted, to say nothing of his record, the question might well seem startling and superfluous. But it has been raised, and made the subject of thoughtful comment. He was decidedly a radical, says a critic: he thought that things must be changed from the root up, and when he thought he had found the root trouble, he kept at it: witness his unswerving loyalty to Single Tax. He did not change easily. But on this very account, he was no liberal, for a liberal must be ready to change every three or four years!

That rather *ex cathedra* description of "liberal,"—much debated word—invites discussion. As the writer proceeds, it becomes plain that he has primarily in view theological rather than social liberalism. Let us look at the matter from each angle in turn. And first from the angle of chief importance to Father Huntington which is theological. The layman realizes humbly his inadequacy to hazard any statement in this field. But he is comforted by knowing that there is no room for difference about Father Huntington's position. He was Catholic of the Catholics, conservative of the conservatives. His conservatism was of course entirely unrelated to timidity. He is a fine example of the too seldom recognized fact that a thoroughly bold mind may remain wholly and obstinately within the horizons of tradition, deeply satisfied with its accredited formulae. He might be called "an adventurous Catholic" rather than a liberal. For it does not settle the matter to recognize him

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as an acknowledged leader in the American Anglo-Catholic revival. There is such a many-shaded thing as liberal Anglo-Catholicism, and it includes sundry contradictory tendencies. In the early years of the century, mighty waves, first of modernism then of humanism rose from the same ground-swell to beat against the rock of the Church. Their advocates had often an earnest, insidious, yet completely sincere desire to appropriate not only Catholic ritual, but Catholic language. Father Huntington was never misled by these alluring tendencies; his feet were too firmly set upon the Rock. He could never with the modernists reduce the Christian statements of fact to significant and beautiful symbols. Christianity was an historic religion resting on events; though, to be sure, each specific event connoted an eternal principle. Nothing could be more explicit than creeds and scriptures; God incarnate was born at the date of a certain Roman census; He suffered under Pontius Pilate. Uniquely among world faiths, Christianity synthesized the historical and the mystical, as it asserted with sublime assurance that at a certain clearly defined point, the Infinite, the Numinous, was manifested on the plane of time and space. If he shrank from the modernist construction, still more alien to him was the humanist—or the Marxist—idea of spiritual realities as product rather than cause, emerging from the natural order in slow process of evolution. No. The Very God of Very God, He by whom all things were made, existed with the Father before all worlds. Father Huntington accepted the creeds with the awed simplicity of a child. Speaking the language of Aquinas, of Paul, he shared every insight of the Christian centuries. Not for him any of those pathetic evasions familiar to many who, reluctant to abandon the riches of Christianity, seek to reduce its asserted realities to suggestive metaphors.

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This unquestioning and, if you like, illiberal attitude was responsible for something that at times perplexed Father Huntington's followers: his feeling toward Bishop Gore. He yielded to no one in honor for that noble leader in much that he held most precious; yet from the days of *Lux Mundi* on, he esteemed Gore a dangerous teacher for simple folk. He said that no matter what phrases Gore used, he would always come back on his knees before Christ as his Lord and Maker, but the young fellows to whom he was speaking had had no such experience, and his words and phrases would soon land them in the abyss. The reporter thinks accordingly that the difficulty was largely a matter of phrasing; but it remains true that Father Huntington in his letters repeatedly warned people against reading Gore's books. He "was quick to sense, almost as a dog senses danger, a phrase or a dubious word that if carried to its logical end might affect one's conception of Him Who is the final self-disclosure of Almighty God."

A person who conceived Bishop Gore "dangerous" could certainly not be esteemed a liberal in theology.

Fortunately, a liberal temperament is not inconsistent with a conservative mind. In his approach to other men, Father Huntington had sympathies too flexible for intolerance. To an unusual degree, he joined firm personal convictions to imaginative understanding of the convictions of other people. Always he took a man where he found him, and he cautioned those younger priests whom he had in training never to force any one to a position for which he was not ready. He never refused to accept with respect the minimum offered, though for himself only the rich fullness of Catholic assertion would suffice. Thus, when some one came to him in considerable agitation, with doubts about eternal punishment, his reply was reassuring: "Many splendid Christians have agreed with you;

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but"—and a statement of his own position followed. He never talked down to people; authoritarian as he was, never did he use authority within that private region of conscience-directed thought and action which is the very citadel of a man's being. In general, he was apt to advise people to adopt a course in accordance with their own inclinations. Once a layman just emerging from Presbyterianism put himself under his direction. To the little upstate city where this layman lived, came in Lent an unusual opportunity to hear special music. He was eager to go, but those were the days when people really kept Lent. He couldn't settle his mind, appealed to Father Huntington, was advised to go, and did so. Through all the great music, he knew an underlying distress. "Well, did you enjoy the concert?" asked Father Huntington when next they met. "No, I had a horrid time." The reply was prompt: "Good, I knew you'd feel that way."

The same flexible attitude was conspicuous when it came to ritual observances. At West Park, the best accredited Catholic tradition was carefully ascertained and scrupulously followed. But it was Father Huntington's custom, as we know, and he enjoined the same custom even to the point of discipline on all his juniors, to accommodate himself when away from home to the liturgical practices of the parish or place where he was, and he was far from sympathetic with certain younger members of the Order who took exception to what they considered an incorrect position for the Ablutions in Celebrations at Kent. His relation to the Wellesley Conference for Church Workers furnishes another illustration. He was from the beginning a firm friend of this pioneer enterprise where leaders and members alike represent all schools of Churchmanship. "To those trained exclusively in one school of theology," says the Report of 1924, "there could have been no more revealing experience

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than to watch the founder of the Order of the Holy Cross and the Bishop of West Virginia kneeling side by side at the daily Eucharist, or to listen to addresses from High, Low, and Broad, all filled with devotion to Our Lord Jesus Christ." After a sermon by Father Huntington on Conversion, the comment was heard: "That was a good old-fashioned Methodist sermon." Difficulties inevitably arose. For instance, one beloved "Catholic" priest caused much embarrassment to the committee on arrangements by insisting that provision must be made for him and every other priest present (a dozen or more) to celebrate his daily mass. In contrast may be cited the quotation just given from the Report. Well can many remember the bowed and humble reverence with which, in company not only of other clergy, but of the laity, Father Huntington would approach the altar to receive the Holy Gifts.

He was not afraid of innovations. He "aroused some temporary excitement," says the Report, "by asking a woman to lead the noonday Intercessions." "I shall never forget," says Miss Mary Thomas, "the naughty glee with which he informed me that he planned to do that very thing. He did love to administer shocks to old fogies."

He wrote to someone, who had lamented with indignation the offensive and repellent methods of some good "Catholics"; methods by which equally good "Protestants" are often completely bewildered:

"I quite understand your feeling about the narrowness of 'Catholics,' and how naturally you involve the Catholic faith itself in that suspicion. Do not the following sentences from Father Russell afford a clue? 'Ideals of any sort are dangerous visitants to vain and shallow minds. In the soil of a poor nature, they bear ugly fruit in arrogance or ignorant pretentiousness. It is not to be denied that instances of this bringing forth of

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wild grapes are known among us. Not even the Faith and the Sacraments will, save in very few instances, supply the lack of common sense or of a sense of humor.' But there is nothing wider than the Love of God, nor saner than the doing of His Will."

### III

Was Father Huntington a liberal in his social outlook? Let us not be in too much of a hurry to say Yes. It is pertinent to remember as a preamble that the word "liberal" is in bad repute today,—being used by people both to the Right and to the Left as a term of scornful reproach. It is also pertinent to cite again the emphatic statement already quoted: Father Huntington was radical, yes, but liberal, no; for "he never changed," and "as a liberal you must be ready to change every four years." Communist and conservative would fully agree in the truth of this surely inadequate description,—and both with a little inclination to sneer. For the liberal temper, inclined to hold all dogma tentatively, and perhaps concerned rather with attitude than with conviction, is equally alien to the defender of the status quo or to the rigid communist ideology; it is enemy to fanaticism of any type. Now it must be confessed, *pace* the critic, that both Father Huntington's social convictions and his efforts brought him distinctly within the Liberal fold as usually envisaged. With "radical," otherwise speaking communist or socialist opinions he had no sympathy at all. As has been pointed out, his social preoccupations in thought and action might furnish a running commentary on a speech by President Roosevelt, or a program of the New Deal. The causes he sponsored, many of them in his time "viewed with alarm" as dangerous novelties, are the common stuff of liberalism today; did not Marx score even Single Tax as the last ditch in which capitalism was taking refuge?

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Yet the deeper we probe, the more we shall be inclined to agree in ranking him as essentially a radical. For it is true that as regards fundamental convictions he was incapable of change. Many fine—and disconcerted—liberals move anxiously among quicksands nowadays, hesitant about their direction, leaping as it were, like Eliza, from cake to cake of the ice breaking up in the River of Destiny, sure only that they must be free to jump just as they please. Father Huntington was more lucky. His feet were on no shifting ice. They rested on a firm foundation, and he knew perfectly well whither he—and humanity—should bend their steps. The causes he served were all, he knew, provisional and partial; but they all aimed to realize, within the structure of society, the sacramental harmony between man's outward and his inward life. That harmony civilization as it is flouts and denies; and no tinkering with alleviations can end the discord. Belief in it, which Christianity must defend desperately against all odds, strikes roots into the very conception of the Nature of Man. This was the belief that inspired Father Huntington with uncompromising hostility to all conventional acquiescence in present-day civilization, on the part of either Church or State. His continual assertion of Christian fundamentals places him, rightly viewed, distinctly with the radicals; did we not at the very outset of this book, suggest that the rediscovery of ancient truth may be the most demanding of behaviour?

Father Huntington's "radicalism" was thus rooted deep, as the Protestant "Social Gospel" rarely was, in his Catholic conception of the God-meant unity of man's being. Perhaps his convictions were closer to the doctrines of those very noble and searching documents, the Papal Encyclicals, than to any other school of contemporary social thought. Even on the surface, his activities did not advance beyond the current and conceivably temporary liberalism of his day and ours; but he

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was radical at the very source of his being. As for his radicalism in conduct, it is obvious; impatiently rejecting compromise, he severed himself from all the efforts of mild institutional Christianity to camouflage, by perilous stress on other-worldliness, acceptance of a social order which denies the basic Catholic conception of human nature.

Radical or liberal, what matters the label? Father Huntington never envisaged quite the world we envisage today. The human landscape changes less often when seen from the religious angle, shining with light from behind the veil, than when beheld illumined by earthly suns. From the social angle, we must repeat that he dates. Yet, despite his partial applications of his social faith, he was a great Precursor. With luke-warm or conventional religion, his spirit knew no kin. In courage and attitude, he was of the prophets; we hail in him that union of sacrificial social adventure with allegiance to the Catholic verities of the past—and the future—which to certain thinkers, Protestant as well as Catholic, offers the best hope of salvaging what is worth salvaging, in our hard-beset modern world.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### *THE FATHER SUPERIOR*

#### I

**I**t has been suggested that Father Huntington's social attitude dated; but his essential work was dateless, for it functioned in a sense apart from the plane of time. This was especially true of his ever-widening ministry as a guide of souls; it was also true in large measure of his tireless labors in the up-building of the Order he had founded. On these two aims the energy, spiritual and practical, of his later life was expended. Let us take them in turn; and first, let us watch him in his relations to his Order.

Like all visions descending into fact, this Order had to be shaped and directed; and the task called for creative and regulative statesmanship of a high quality. Some of the problems were such as inhere in any group life, others were markedly special. For his driving wish was, as we know, the hope to afford under American conditions and in harmony with American institutions, scope and opportunity for a vocation which had flowered in an entirely different culture, and had generally been conceived as irrelevant and obsolete in Protestant Christendom. The revival of the Religious Life in twentieth-century America. Here was an Adventure indeed.

Father Huntington, we recall, had deliberately rejected the idea of receiving his training in an English Order, because he felt so strongly, with his father, that an American community should express the American spirit. In the sort of epigram which may be as misleading as it is tempting, some one has said:

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“Cowley wanted to save souls; Father Huntington wanted to save men.” Without accepting the implication about Cowley, we may say that the phrase does point to Father Huntington’s particular zeal to suppress nothing, but, in the strange mode of life he proposed, to offer a medium for a man’s whole personality. His ideal for his Order was rich in human values. Whether or no he was a liberal in personal attitude, there can be no question as to his liberal conception for his Order. “He was keenly aware,” says Father Whittmore, “of the importance of all the arts and sciences, and felt that the Order should develop the capacity in either of these directions of its individual members, teaching in general that we should consecrate the things of this world, not so much by their disuse as by using them to God’s glory. To my mind,” concludes Father Huntington’s successor, “this is the very ethos of our community.” And again: “I have never known a man with such a passion for liberty.”

To the development of his Order on these lines, Father Huntington devoted himself. The release, not the restriction, of life: that was to be its keynote. It is suggestive that one of his favorite books was that fine old classic, Montalembert’s *Monks of the West*,—which, like Eleanor Duckett’s stirring account of St. Benedict in her recent *Gateway to the Middle Ages*, presents monasticism, rather paradoxically to some minds, as a movement of spontaneous expansion and liberation. “Free, because imbound,”—only those who have meditated long on Wordsworth’s pregnant phrase will respect that paradox. And what tremendous difficulties, in realizing the ideal under modern conditions! One can not quite appeal to history, for monasticism as it crystallized certainly had belied it all too often.

The task had two aspects: one facing inward, toward the Order itself, the other outward, toward its relations as a cor-

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porate whole with the Church and the Community at large. Now as Superior, now as simple member, Father Huntington labored earnestly in translating into terms of contemporary life the three Vows of which he had written. Especially the Vow of Obedience. How does the "ethos" of which Father Whittemore spoke and the "passion for liberty," agree with that? Perhaps it can't. A dialectical tension between concepts of authority and of freedom marks the whole history of the O. H. C. as of every group which ever attempted concerted action. But we are told that the resolution of tensions is the very law of life.

There are two distinct conceptions of the type of authority suitable to religious community: the military, and the filial. Is such a community modelled on an army or on a family? The filial conception was that of Father Huntington. It is much harder to realize than the other. One might even be tempted to a little irony when recalling his frequent remark that the polity of religious orders had kept pace with the changing polity of the home, for sometimes one is tempted to concur with the naughty definition of the automobile as "the American home," and as for the family, does it not disintegrate before our eyes? We have not yet, however, abandoned the Christian idea of what the family ought to be, and the more groups the filial or family ideal can be extended to the better. At the same time, there is much to be said for the idea of the army, which finds its supreme example in the magnificent disciplines and achievements of the Jesuit Order. Even the outsider discerns during the formative years of the O.H.C. many indications of the clash within the Order of the two techniques. Men dominated and possessed by the beauty of the later monastic ideal will always be desirous to reproduce it in its entirety. They will draw back hesitant from others who are convinced that a living ideal in order to endure in its essentials

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must alter in its form. Apart from any question of pressure, there were certainly oscillations in the attitude of the Father Founder himself. Inner conflict can never have ceased between his staunch modern Americanism and current Catholic assumptions about the role of authority:

“I am sure that in the last years he has given up the fight,” wrote some one very near him, in 1921. “The whole tendency within the Order is toward authority and Roman rule, rather than toward that social democratic ideal with which he began in the old days. I do not believe,”—so continues this sorrowful and disillusioned observer, “that it is possible to keep such an ideal within the Catholic party.”

How natural it would have been had life in the O.H.C. set like plaster in a mould as the decades passed! Indeed such a process is in a way necessary to permanence. “Organization is necessary; yet organization destroys,” once said Father Huntington sadly. But against the sharp criticism of the Order just cited, we may place Father Whittemore’s description of his attitude, and strong testimony to the constant breadth and spontaneity of his methods:

“He said about his Order that if the time ever came when it ceased to change it would be dead.”

How wise a safeguard, in what enterprise you will, this watchful and experimental attitude! Meantime, to realize the undying persistence of the Father Founder’s “social democratic ideal,” and his large degree of success in maintaining it, there is no need to turn to the testimony of others. The best way is to watch him in action.

## II

As preamble, see him first in the long intermittent periods when, Founder and leader though he was, he joyously relin-

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quished the guidance of the Order into other hands; and note him as it were avid to obey. A peculiarly scrupulous courtesy marked his conduct: "My Superior tells me that I may see you at such and such a time." . . . "I am permitted to do thus and so"—are phrases strewn through his private letters. Even in his eightieth year, he refuses to take advantage of the Superior's permission to go and come as he pleases, and writes to Father Sill, "I hope that I shall be let to come to you for a few days." And in 1907, to another: "The Father Superior says that I may see you two or three times a year, if you can arrange for your confessions at those times." Here was no mannerism, but evidence of a deep and inward quality, and we can infer, if we are sensitive, various conditions and circumstances under which the restraint placed upon him may not have been easy to bear. But he was disciplined to his finger tips. He observed the detailed requirements of the Rule with minute accuracy; no fluctuations in taste, no boredom with routine or wish for change were ever to be in least degree indulged; if restraint ever irked him, it was in deeper levels than these.

The acid test came when power was placed in his hands. As far as can be judged he was singularly immune to its snares and temptations; he probably gave it up with relief, and resumed it with a sigh. He was continually repeating that there should never be responsibility if authority were absent, and his attitude, a little perplexing to a believer in diffused democratic control, led him systematically to refuse membership on Boards or Committees. But putting the Totalitarian State out of our minds, we must accept the fact that to him the obedience of which he wrote so movingly in the Rule found its natural expression in obedience to an individual; when he became that individual, he exercised to the full, therefore, as in duty bound, the authority that was his. He was intensely desirous that his young novices should drain to the very dregs the cup of com-

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plete submission. Sometimes his methods have even a little suggestion of the classic tale of the monk who, meekly obeying when his superior made him spend hours watering a dry stick, was rewarded by the sudden bursting of the stick into leaf and blossom. May similar miracles happen in modern times? "I shall never forget," Father Whittemore is speaking, "an agonizing fortnight which I spent with him in Baltimore when I was a postulant. He had taken me to assist in preaching a Mission, but his chief objective so far as my part was concerned seems to have been to make me miserable. He was pleasant enough at meals or when others were present, but immediately we were alone he went out of his way to snub me. If for example I went to his room to take care of his fire, he slammed the door in my face. On the way home he told me that he had deliberately made things difficult for me, in order to test my vocation."

"The older fathers say that there were occasions when on Missions he would stop one of them on his way to the pulpit, asking him what he intended to preach about, and then direct him to change to another topic."

Such disciplinary gymnastics may seem of dubious value, and they certainly went against the grain with him. If he used them, it was because he deemed them needed in a special case. For he had no blanket formula. He was absolutely Rule-conscious; strict observance was expected and often enforced. Yet within the framework of the Rule, scope was found to treat each individual as unique, and we can only admire the flexibility and variety in his diagnosis. If some men, looking back, record, half humorously, harsh treatment and autocratic methods, there are others, and perhaps a larger number, who speak of a certain hesitant leniency in his attitude. His conception of Holy Obedience had nothing mechanical about it; it searched the very depths of personality. "He did all in his

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power," says Father Whittemore, "to draw out the men under him, and to give them the opportunity to express themselves. . . . What he looked for in a member of a community was generous coöperation and team work; that a man should give not only conformity to express directions, but that he should dedicate all his faculties to furthering his Superior's ideals. . . . It may be part of one's obligation to obedience to offer criticism and suggestion when one feels that his Superior's object could be better accomplished than in the way first decided on. Of course such objections should be made in a spirit of complete docility, and the subject should be prepared with a loving and joyous heart to have them vetoed; but he owes to his community his powers of initiative and criticism along with the rest of his being. If such an ideal is grasped and an earnest effort to live up to it is made, it is easy to see how much more exacting it is than any notion of mere conformity to particular commands. It means the generous handing over of all one's being to God, through the community and one's Superior."

It is rather amusing to picture how methods at the monastery must have affected even the most idealistic of American youth, living as it does in days when self-expression, even on very low levels, is exalted as the only road to freedom. Holy Cross, stressing the Christian paradox, and using methods of training distinctly unusual, inevitably knew its rebels, even among those to whom the romantic aspects of the life made strong appeal. No wonder that as the records show, while some sought even stricter control than was offered, others fell by the way. The Order could hardly expect to avoid the common human fate.

All religious groups attract types diverging from the commonplace: the exceptionally strong, the exceptionally weak; the formal literalist and the romantic rebel; the neurotic, and the defeated seeking refuge from danger; the heroic and crea-

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tive, seeking realization of vision; the self-tortured victims of an inferiority complex, and, more pitiable, the complacent victims of an opposite complex; the practical organizer and the dreamer of dreams, the restive fanatic and the potential saint. In ordinary life, where we all conform outwardly to circumstance, such types slip along together comfortably enough; but adventurous social experiments allow no protective coloring. The devil, moreover, is notoriously busy in convents, where just because men and women are more or less immune to his coarser temptations, they are surprisingly subject to the assaults of little meannesses, petty, personal, and poisonous as mosquitoes, and where the very purity of a high ideal may become a lure to deceptive lack of charity and to self-will.

People often resent a firm hand, while at the same time craving it, consciously or unconsciously. "Mother, must I do what I like all day long?" plaintively asked a little victim of a progressive school. The Holy Cross novices may have been right in thinking that Father Huntington wavered too much between indulgence and severity. The wisest pedagogue seeking to develop life not by imposition from without, but by quickening from within, has a well-nigh impossible task. Probably the men hardest for Father Huntington to guide fruitfully were neither the unbalanced nor the recalcitrant; they were the literalists. "It was not enough that the individual do all he was told to do with meticulous exactitude. He said of one such man that despite his almost perfect external obedience, he had no vocation for the Religious life." A satirical note would creep into his voice as when he spoke of "a good Religious"; a phrase sometimes used to describe a person who was never late at meals and never absent from office, but whose heart was perhaps corroded by self-pity and egotistical sensitiveness, by ungenerous distastes and mean criticisms of others, and by insistent desire to impose his own preferences on other

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people. Everyone who has lived in a Religious community will recognize the type.

How about the Superior himself, making, like Father Huntington, the daring attempt to combine opposite techniques, as he sought to train men to obey the exhortation,

“Confirm thy soul in self-control,  
Thy liberty in law”? <sup>1</sup>

The difficulty of leading a community is doubled if one rejects in toto that convenient short-cut to efficiency and peace, the military technique. Demanding indeed is the work of any leader of men. Watchful self-discipline must be his who seeks to discipline others. He must guard on the one hand against the vicious and insidious enjoyment of power, and on the other against confusing his own indolence with respect for freedom. No one except the man Christ Jesus ever handled his fellow-mortals without making mistakes.

So far as an outsider is permitted to watch Father Huntington, the impression is conveyed that by long patience, supplementing his naturally sympathetic temperament, he became an exceptional master of men. Unwearying affection, acute insight, sound judgment, careful search for justice, balance and versatility, all these are to be found. His private correspondence furnishes impressive evidence of the anxious, loving, tireless consideration he gave to every personal problem that arose. In the intimacy of that small group, they were many. The questions were not primarily those concerning diverse opinions. It is hard enough to secure working agreement in opinion among groups in reaction against convention, where thought escapes adherence to the lazy rigidities of the status quo; witness the fissures yawning among radicals today. But uncertainties at Holy Cross went deeper; ideologies were less

<sup>1</sup> Katherine Lee Bates. “America the Beautiful.”

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often involved than character values. Could the community achieve reality in fellowship? Can a Religious Order help to solve that central social problem, the reconciliation of maximum liberty for the individual with maximum unity in the corporate life? Only the Order itself can tell.

A chief value of small communities, is that they serve as a microcosm in which the tensions and conflicts of democracy can be studied, and, if a religious dynamic is sufficiently present, can conceivably be reconciled.

It does not do to be disheartened by the way human nature behaves. The prototype of all Christian communities is a little group of a dozen. Every defect in group action is illustrated in their story. They squabbled, they tried to dictate to their leader, they constantly misunderstood Him, and under criticism or attack, they all stood from under, deserted Him and ran away. The best of them were jealous of one another and pressed naïvely for precedence and power. They reverted obstinately to the very methods He had forbidden, pleading that fire be sent from Heaven on their enemies. Certainly a discouraging set of men to serve as pioneers in manifesting social harmony or in fulfilling a unified purpose! Yet they were on the whole the most successful group of "Religious" ever seen, and they received the Apostolic commission.

The years passed at Holy Cross. There were withdrawals and returns. Vocations were tested, and discovered lacking; vocations, after long, keen, and tender watchfulness, were recognized and approved. The Order grew. And it was always very much alive. It is possible that administrative work always went a little against the grain with Father Huntington; though he told some one once that he had not been immune to the lust for power. Those whom he trained loved him dearly. "I owe Father Founder, as did all of us who knew him, more than I

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can possibly express," says Father Whittemore. But it may be noted that he is remembered in the Order not primarily as a Superior, in spite of the long periods during which he served in that capacity. The name of the heart for him is "Father Founder."

### III

During the pre-war period, while the community was finding its way, that crucial matter of testing and training private vocations which was Father Huntington's loving concern, was held within the sweep of larger questions regarding the policy of the O.H.C. Conscious as he was of his grave responsibilities when Superior, Father Huntington was yet in a sense passive, docile to unseen forces. "I will hearken what the Lord God will say concerning me." Thinking of the whole process as one of growth, he practised profoundly and inwardly that virtue of humility which he so extolled; and when we remember his nature, so ardent in initiative, so firm and bold in action, we are reverently aware of the gradual shaping of his inmost life into the very likeness of the Son of Man. Sometimes he would say that the vocation of the O.H.C. might be only temporary; God might be using it as a stepping-stone toward the establishment of the Religious Life in America in a more permanent form. And often his mind may have reverted to the quaint and solemn letter written to him by the veteran pioneer in the Cause he served, Father Benson, on the occasion of his Profession:

"If we can secure an eternity in Heaven by the Blood of Jesus, we may leave it with God to give or not to give perpetuity on earth to those things which we have initiated." Holding to this provisional and tentative conception, no won-

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der that he was inconsistent. The consistent man tries to coerce events and circumstances; consistency can never be the trait of the man who has learned to practise a little of that maligned virtue of obedience, toward circumstance in its onward flow.

To the type of obedience which would place a community practising it more appropriately in the Roman than in the Anglican communion, he never surrendered. We shall not agree with that sorrowful comment that the Father Founder had given up the fight. It was a fight never lost and never won. The smallest details can involve the largest principles; no detail was too small for his attention. Each that appeared was met by him with supple mind and scrupulous thought for special needs. Take the matter of dispensations: "The spirit of obedience manifests itself in humble request for dispensation of the Rule as occasions arise, as much as in general fulfilment of the regulations; and a judicious use of the power of dispensing the Rule is the chief means by which the integrity of the latter can be safeguarded without becoming a fetich." One surmises that the older Fathers were more scrupulous than the young recruits. Father Sill, for instance, carrying the exacting burdens of Headmaster of a lively school, asks meekly to be dispensed now and then from the long hours of private meditation. Meanwhile, young postulants would smoke; sometimes in their cells, sometimes even in public Conferences; they were known—terrible thought—to play tennis in their habits; they were restive. Or else, they might be intolerably fussy; shocked when devotional images were temporarily displaced for cleaning purposes. Such things could be adjusted with patience and a sense of humor. But Father Huntington must have sighed.

Many small instances could be given of his tact, or, shall we not better say, of his Christian love. As for instance, when a question arose as to putting Prize Day at Kent on a Sunday. It

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had been a joyous custom for Father Huntington to give the Prizes on that day. Now he questions; he asks Father Sill's advice: "As you know, I try never to interfere with your work at Kent, . . . but I feel that as representing the Community, I may do wrong in going to Kent on Prize Day if observed on Sunday. What do you think I ought to do?" The question came at an unfortunate time. The School was passing through an epidemic of influenza and a boy had just died. Father Sill's reply gave a spirited and conclusive refutation of the accusation: "If this sort of day is secular, God help us." Father Huntington, replying, full of contrition and sympathy, tells the source of the criticism; it was "dear Father Allen," in Liberia. "It is a real grief to me," writes the Father Superior, "that I should have written to you just when I did. I had waited a good while until I thought the acuteness of the situation at the school was over. . . . But though it would have been easier for me to ignore Father Allen's request, I do not feel that I have a right to do so. He is the oldest member of our community, he was five years at Kent; you never questioned his loyalty or devotion. . . . I wrote to ask your advice. I am sorry that you do not give it. . . . I am quite prepared to act contrary to the judgment of Father Allen, if mistaken, but I did feel that I ought to ask your counsel."

Endless the questions arising in regard to the expanding activities of the Order at Kent, St. Andrews, Liberia; questions all calling for real statesmanship and administrative ability. These like all other things in the Order's organic life, as indeed like more personal matters, were in last analysis subject as the Constitutions of the Order show to democratic control. But democracy, too, must have leaders. One question concerning the community as it faced outward was largest, most urgent, most comprehensive of all. The Order of the Holy Cross had

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proposed to itself a very special function. In its very nature and in its primary aim, it differed from any Order transplanted from another country. It could not go serenely on its way, comparatively regardless of the distinctive character of the culture in which it found itself or the character of the distinctive portion of the Christian Church in which it played its part. It desired to make itself an integral element in the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America. Here indeed was an enterprise calling for statesmanship of the very best!

This is hardly the place to survey the issues to be decided, presenting themselves to the Father Founder and his colleagues. Should the Order quietly seek to enter the general life of the "Episcopal" Church? Or like some individual Catholics, and alas, like some Catholic groups, should it see its duty in accentuating the divisive tendencies always active in that very complex and more or less heterogeneous body? It is surprising how many specific problems within the scope of this question arose to be settled. Should the O.H.C. participate, for instance, in a Church Congress, where it would probably be looked at askance and would certainly not feel at home? How far should it force its ways in a local situation, how far adapt itself to a community in which it ministered? Countless specific situations had to be met; be it remembered that the Order, particularly in its early years, had to make its way in a society and a Church quite puzzled as to what it was doing and very often uncertain of approval. Varied indeed were the adjustments called for! We can see Father Huntington, with the full collaboration of his Order, making his contribution, preserving, as we have already noted, with marvelous success the careful balance between firm loyalty to Catholic principles and eager friendliness toward those followers of a common Lord whose vision differed from his own.

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### IV

No, Father Huntington was never defeated, and he never gave up the fight. The critic we cited was quite wrong. But we, watching from outside, become aware that in spite of the devotion to him in the community the Father Founder was a very lonely man. "There was a certain aloofness about him," says Father Whittemore. It has been suggested by more than one loving and uncritical observer that he was deeply disappointed, and probably this is true. Many of the adjustments to which he devoted himself with such patient courage were demanded by the phase of civilization in which he had launched his adventure, and this he understood very well. Moreover, apart from the natural and inevitable tests common to all movements that live and grow, there existed among the leaders of the Order of the Holy Cross that inward divergence in ideas of method which we have suggested; to press for his own liberal conceptions, in loyalty to the others, was also all in the day's work, and here he was notably and beautifully successful. But there was yet a challenge beyond. In the very centre of James Huntington's being had been heard a call to a special ideal; the necessity to surrender this in its fullness was forced on him. Here surely was the sharpest sorrow he was called on to endure, and here the ultimate test of his obedience.

He did not fail. He threw himself with all his energies into realizing the revival of the monastic life as it was conceived by the Order in general; and we must never forget that among the early Fathers of Holy Cross, and those admitted to their fellowship as years went on, whatever their differences as to methods, there was a large area of absolute and basic agreement. But theirs was not the whole vision envisaged by his ardent youth. For he had definitely conceived a community which should combine intrepid leadership toward social jus-

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tice, following the trail thither wherever it might lead, with those interior personal disciplines and those spiritual ministries which the Order of the Holy Cross did so thoroughly practise. But his vision was too wide, it was perhaps too personal to himself, to be realized in all its aspects by any one else; and so far as evidence goes, no one through the long years of the up-building of the Order ever shared it in its entirety.

We need not pity him; his was the common lot. What leader, in secular or in religious life, has ever escaped it? What Order has ever as it developed, fully conformed to the ideals of its Founder? The Franciscans are a salient example of loss and change, but they are far from being the only ones; and while one grieves for the tragedy of thwarted hopes, one must recognize the Divine Wisdom through which failure in noble aims becomes the very means of sanctification. One can watch Father Huntington grow in grace from year to year.

On one occasion, a friend, finding him plunged in deep sadness over the defeat of his earnest efforts in some specific matter, asked him how the failure of his prayers affected him. Father Huntington paused a moment. Then he said gravely:

“I still praise God for granting the prayers of other men.”

Presently, his features illuminated with a solemn glow, he added:

“And ever, forever, I praise Him for what He is.”

No one looking at the Order of the Holy Cross as it developed, largely through the inspiration of its Founder and from time to time under his guidance, should for a moment doubt the value of what amidst all uncertainties is in process of achievement. No need to point to its educational work, to those schools under its auspices which have so fully commended themselves to public respect. Let us rather submit as evidence that it was needed, the extraordinary response through the length and breadth of the Protestant Episcopal

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Church to what it offered. As its members move about holding Missions and Retreats, we note the great share of the Order in restoring to Christian devotion the glorious heritage of Catholic worship. Still more do we note the fruitfulness of the work for God and man within the Beloved Community, when we trace the slow invisible results of the natural and simple presentation of Catholic discipline, with the help it affords to the growth of that most intangible and most lovely creation in God's universe,—souls of whom the supreme desire is union with Him. From whatever angle we view it, the history of the O.H.C. is justification, were such needed, of the technically "Religious" life in the modern American world.

And what is said of this Order may be said of Religious Orders in general. Today we witness quite apart from the Churches, the revival of two clamorous demands which the Church alone can adequately meet: the demand for training in the contemplative life and for opportunity to practise it; and the complementary demand for sublimated forms of human fellowship. Forms and methods, as Father Huntington so clearly saw, must alter, as cultures and social systems rise and pass. But the needs of the soul are unchanging, and unchanging the spiritual wisdom of the Christian ages, which the Church has in her keeping. Whatever new aspects Religious Orders may assume, their unique power to satisfy those needs will be recognized more and more, as the Orders fulfill their appointed function within her.

Let us end this chapter by listening to the words of two leaders who might almost seem to echo and continue the message of James Huntington. His successor Alan Whittemore wrote as follows in *The American Church Monthly* for April 1938, reviewing a book, *Called of God*, by Lucius Cary, S.S.J.E.:

"Most of our communities are in the midst of that crucial

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and difficult stage wherein a second generation of Religious are taking over the responsibility from the Founder's first disciples." He continues, pointing out the agonizing struggle that ensues, the danger of lowered standards, the new needs for the new day; actually, with sad insight, he writes sympathetically of the Brother Elias who continued, while he betrayed, the work of Francis of Assisi. He comes to some special difficulties in the Anglican communion:

"1): That the Religious Life was renewed in our communion after the lapse of blank centuries. Therefore the founders were without the monastic background; they had to take either mediaeval or Roman Catholic models, and their chief contacts were with books rather than with living men. . . .

"2): They rise from long slumber during the transition of the Western world from one civilization to another. Crisis is upon us."

The result is that Religious life in the Anglican Communion is still in the formative stage. While stability must be sought, there is need of great flexibility and above all of "a richer conception of obedience."

In just what respects Father Whittemore would desire to see modifications, he does not tell us, except for the pregnant hint that "right use rather than rejection" of normal goods and pleasures must be sought: that "we must go further in the adventurous course of using rather than rejecting the common things of God."

These fine quotations show that the Order of James Huntington proceeds with firm intent to maintain his sane insight, and his thoughtful liberality of spirit. They also frankly recognize the peculiar difficulties, due to the lack of a continuous living tradition behind them, and the consequent self-consciousness and groping hesitations, to which Father Sargent

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from the safe shelter of his (Roman) Benedictine monastery dispassionately but with calm superiority referred.

Finally, let us quote a leader in an English Community with which Father Huntington may well have felt himself in especial sympathy: the Community of the Resurrection, centred at Mirfield. An admirable brief History of Monasticism by Father Paul Bull of this community, published in 1914, ends with a forward glance into a possible future. So consonant is much he says with early ideas of Father Huntington, that we need no excuse for quoting freely. Father Bull is thinking of the Anglican communion in England; but he is also thinking of the Church Universal, and Father Whittemore's recognition of the crisis and threatening doom which casts over us today a deepening shadow, is echoed in his pages:

"The Church has done noble work in past centuries in educating the poor into liberty and in teaching them to think. But now she seems unable to guide or inspire or direct the forces she has liberated. Allied too closely to the privileged classes by the antecedents and social status of her ministry, bound to the wealthy by the necessities of her vast institutional obligations, she seems unable to restrain the gross luxury and selfishness of the rich, or to retain the allegiance and affections of the poor. . . . The forces of social unrest move by blind impulse toward the light. And the Church, which ought to inspire and direct their movement . . . stands nervously aside watching the movement which she ought to lead and pathetically clinging to the traditions of an age which has passed away. . . . She has never since the Reformation mobilized her forces and marched to the rescue of the weak and the oppressed, the unemployed or aged poor. She has only mobilized her full force in defense of her endowments. . . . She seems to have no prophetic insight, no vision, no power to adapt herself to meet the needs of the age. . . .

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"This is the first great claim that we make on the Church today, that it should make a tremendous Act of Penitence. . . . And the penitence must lead to reparation while there is yet time."<sup>1</sup>

In such reparation, Father Bull believes the Religious Orders may be a chosen instrument:

"We are deeply concerned with the command of Jesus, that we should awaken to our utter spiritual poverty and nakedness and blindness, and by a passionate repentence and entire self-surrender win 'the gold refined by fire,' and 'white garments,' and eye salve with which to anoint our eyes, that again our nation may see the Heavenly Vision and obey it.

"One of the means for winning these gifts from God is the revival of the Religious Life, for while Religious Orders are not of the 'esse' of the Church, history suggests that they are of its 'bene essere,' and that our communion will never make its full contribution to the Church's life and do its share in the reunion of Christendom until they are revived."<sup>2</sup>

We can not quote Father Bull's practical analysis of opportunities open to Religious Orders in England, to share and to promote preparation for a New World Day. But one rejoices to find a conception which the Father Founder of the Order of the Holy Cross would so have welcomed. These two were not alone. They were members of a noble company, seeking not only to restore to the Church her ancient heritage, but to fulfil and justify her prophetic function. In the development of the Order of the Holy Cross, such function may seem to have been obscured. Perhaps the fulfilment of more than one task at a time should not have been attempted. But one is encouraged to believe that the vision of James Hunt-

<sup>1</sup> *The Revival of the Religious Life.* By Paul B. Bull. Longmans, Green & Company, N. Y., 1914, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224.

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ington's youth, though it tarry yet shall come, and in the magnificent paradox of prophecy, it shall not tarry. Because he was priest and Religious, he had shared the life of the workers in complete surrender. In the Name of the Carpenter of Nazareth he had valorously joined the struggle where hopes for a society founded on justice and brotherhood opposed the conventions of Church and State. May the prophetic function of his Order yet be revived? The story of the Order of the Holy Cross is not ended.

Whatever the future shall hold, the gifts of the Religious Orders in general and of the Order of the Holy Cross in particular, can be doubted by no one in contact with them. Their great and present values must be recognized with humble gratitude by all who are assured, in one of the finest phrases of Father Huntington, that earthly life is in its one essential meaning, a "School of the Eternal."





## CHAPTER XVII

### *THE GUIDE OF SOULS*

#### I

**M**INISTRY to individuals is from first to last the heart of James Huntington's priestly vocation. So it was in his simple early work with his sister Ruth in the little Chapel of Syracuse; such through the long New York years was the constant background and inspiration of his zeal for social causes. During the long quiet stretches of his later life, the circle of those who felt his personal touch spread continually; no one will ever know the extent of his secret influence in strengthening and purifying the interior life.

As we concentrate attention on this aspect of his personality, we are tempted to forget the reformer, the social crusader, even the organizer. But we must not. Sustained by his Sacramental faith, he wished that the soul, which "doth the bodie make," as Spenser says, should be holy. Just because he would never have agreed in what Berdiaev calls the Marxist "regimentation of man," which ignores the individual, he rejected, as we have seen in his controversy over Temperance, the convenient half-truth, used still by the sly demonic forces of evil, that personality is independent of circumstance. He held that the whole social organism must become the harmonious instrument and expression of the soul; but the care of that soul was supremely important to him. Only through it, could society be reborn; for it the Son of Man had been crucified; would have been crucified, had one single human being been otherwise consigned to darkness and the shadow of death.

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Seldom do we find a Christian leader in whom the aims at personal and at social salvation are so perfectly balanced. For on superficial levels of religious thinking, the tiresome discussion never stops, between those seeking external reform and those plausibly insisting that inward conversion is the only need. No one who has stood in spirit on the Damascus road is likely to deprecate the inward change; but to the endless consequent struggle to further community righteousness, let Paul's Epistles witness. The weakness of such revivalist movements as sweep periodically through Christendom, is that conversion is often regarded as end rather than beginning, and what should be merely a call to lifelong battle is treated as a final victory. "Wicked men are messing up a perfectly good social order," is the creed of Buchmanites. "Change the hearts of individuals and there will be no more divorce, labor trouble, corruption in business, or international war." So an editorial writer reports a certain Bishop: "To me," continues this somewhat exasperated reporter, "it is not a case of bad men messing up a good order, but of good men finding it impossible to make an out-worn economic and social order work." Father Huntington would have gone a step further; he would have said that it was up to the "good men," the converted, to put their consecrated minds as well as their sanctified wills, at the task of building a new world. Social dynamic should be latent in "changed" lives. But the helplessness of the "converted" might be the theme of many a sermon.

We are travelling too far afield, lured by his rare escape from the "Either-Or" fallacy, and by the thought of his dynamic power, turned now toward social reform, now toward patient spiritual ministries. The central area of these ministries was of course his own Order, where, as we have seen, he shared with the novice masters such close individualized watchfulness as puts to shame the mass-production

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methods prevalent in religious education. But over such wide fields extended his work that one could almost say that the whole Episcopal Church became his parish. Leading clergy, from the Bishops down, quietly and constantly sought his counsel. Missions and Retreats were occasions which invariably led to sundry close personal relationships, sustained often by interviews, more often, and continuously, by correspondence. How perennial the need of struggling men and women for guidance, on both the higher and the lower altitudes of experience! Need of the penitent for counsel and absolution; of the weak,—and who is not weak?—for training in obedience, of the bewildered for fellowship with those competent to clarify the mind; need at every turn for the spiritual expert, not withdrawn into his solitudes, but helping the feebler and more immature on the pilgrim way. The profoundest duty of every true shepherd is like that of the chief Shepherd, the shepherding of souls.

The most scathing criticism of Protestantism in its later phases is perhaps its inadequacy to meet those needs. It has ignored them at its peril. Of course there are many shining exceptions to a sweeping statement like this. The dying are, one hopes, sustained, the sick are visited, the prisoners are not wholly forgotten; and many a pastor might reveal, if he would, unwearying devotion to the burdened men and women who press on him for aid. But by and large most students of religious history would agree that contemporary Protestant Churches tend to ignore the more intimate phases of human fellowship. The rank and file of ordinary Church-going folk are left quite alone, obsessed by their own inhibitions and reserves, to stumble as they may, unaided by official guides, along that pilgrim way which every one of us is treading. Does the ordinary parish offer what help it should? From the secret drama of the soul, buffeted by blatant or insidious

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powers of evil, beset by temptations, aspirations, perplexities, and sins, no one escapes; and it is the most important part of existence. There is a marvelous art of this inner life and a perfectly definite science of spiritual progress is expounded in the books of many masters. But men crave the living human touch. They rarely find it. The dignified decencies of good taste hem us on every side like a barbed-wire fence. Certainly the Protestant Episcopal Church a half century ago in the United States as a whole, largely ignored the vast accumulation of wisdom in Catholic tradition, while evangelistic movements were always a little alien to the Anglican temper.

Here surely is a field where the function of the Religious as supplementing the parish priest must seem clear. For he is trained as the priest seldom is to this very end. It is enough to study the life-giving and lovely relations of Von Hügel to his director the Abbé Huvelin, to realize that the great art of spiritual shepherding has not died. It is an art supremely delicate in which not all priests can be expected to be adepts, nor can parochial organization always supply it, no matter how strong be its Girls Friendly, and its Service League, how successful its U.T.O. and its Sunday School, its Parish Lunch-eons and its Forums. The response is surprising when individual and private spiritual help is offered as a matter of course. Centuries before the modern psychiatrist appeared, psychological insight, of a kind new in race life, into the deeper mysteries of experience had been won by the Catholic priest. Nor has the psychiatrist supplanted the need for him, as the wisest of that clan well know. One may hint in hesitant humility that psychiatric methods, applied for instance by sweet girl graduates just out of college, primed with technical knowledge, to the sorrows and problems of the unfortunate "poor," can never take the place of the Father in God.

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Civilization suffers in its inmost regions when it dispenses with the priest.

These thoughts approach the Arcana. But no Life of Father Huntington could be complete which failed to take cognizance of the extraordinary range of personal ministries to which he was called. By no means confined to the formal Ministry of Reconciliation, they covered the whole sweep of human needs. As for the Sacrament of Penance, recognition of its value had been a milestone in his advance to full Catholic practice, as appears from the touching letter to his father quoted on page 75. His faith in that mystery of sacramental grace in absolution which strikes deeper than any obvious values in personal guidance, was complete. But he discriminated. Writing to Bishop Potter, he had firmly and frankly insisted that confession "must be a fixed and definite part of all our mission work," yet he had gone on: "While saying this, we wish to disclaim the use of *Direction*. . . . This seems to us fraught with danger to both priest and penitent." It was perhaps more or less in his own despite, therefore, that he became one of the greatest Directors that the American Church has known. He received the unburdening of countless lives. The mere range of his extant correspondence reveals relationships of widest variety; this although, as has been noted, he took scrupulous care never to keep confidential letters and rarely to write them.

"I have mentioned the letters he wrote to his penitents; along with these there were literally thousands of others," says Father Whittemore. "Father Huntington seemed to be writing letters at every conceivable spare moment,—in the rectory of a parish, in his office at the monastery, or on the train. It was characteristic of him that he was intent on getting his letters posted at the earliest opportunity, often going to ex-

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tremes, or causing others to do so, to get them off on a slightly earlier train." In the early days at the Mission House, he would keep on undaunted in his correspondence, "even when it was so cold that ink froze in the inkwells, breaking the ice that formed as occasion arose." He rarely or never used a type-writer; his letters were seldom very long; they were habitually absorbed in the correspondent's situation or needs, though occasionally with touches of fellow feeling, to comfort a faltering wayfarer with the eager assurance: "I have been there too." Many of them represent in a way a stereotype: appointment dates, seasonal greetings, often very lovely, requests for coöperation, notes of condolence, felicitations on an engagement, sympathy in illness, advice on the usual sort of emergencies. In these letters we find Father Huntington taking men and women as he found them, aware of the simple and usual pageant of daily life. The extant and available correspondence is mainly with "good" people; the "bad,"—drunkards, drug addicts, social victims, so many of whom he counted among his friends—are not likely to be articulate. Nor do many of the letters reveal preoccupation with reforms. For that matter, we may concede a good deal of force to the half-truth that any social order, no matter what, will give plenty of chance for the Seven Deadly Sins to disport themselves, and for normal joys and sorrows to wait on the pilgrim way. But the trait on which we have so often dwelt must be stressed once more. In spite of the fact that the occasions for most of the letters were such as the common lot provides, one becomes aware that each represents to writer and to recipient alike an individualized approach. Father Huntington never generalized people. Here is one tribute: "When Father Huntington became my Director, I was always deeply impressed with his unselfish interest in any subject I brought before him.

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He never forgot. Often he renewed the subject, and wanted to know how things had eventuated. He was amazingly prompt in answering letters. If I asked prayers for any object, he not only prayed (and marked answers were given to those prayers), but he took time to write and ask concerning the subject of the intercession. In judgment he was extraordinarily swift."

Another beautiful bit of appreciation written shortly after his death may be quoted:

"He certainly was one of the most wonderful and holy priests our Church ever had, and no one can take his place. One of his remarkable qualities was his many-sidedness, which resulted in each person who knew him closely having his or her particular memory of him, in a way unique for each. It seems impossible for any one person to write his biography;"—(this biographer concurs)—"each friend who reads it will remember many things that were not mentioned therein."

## II

He shall speak for himself now. Most of the letters we shall quote offer definite spiritual guidance; they have been chosen almost at random.

First, an early group to a young married woman; a college graduate, clever, eager-minded, fretting a bit as is the way of such under the restrictions of her lot. She had sent him a long list of books for his approval, since she desired to be very docile. But he won't let her have either St. Augustine's *Confessions*, or *Lux Mundi* "at present," though he highly endorses *The Devout Life* of St. Francis de Sales, Fénelon's *Letters to Women*, the *Life and Letters of Dean Church*, and Lawrence Scupoli's *Spiritual Combat*.

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Next, we will present careful letters to a Harvard freshman, much occupied, in the usual fashion, with theological discussions with his room-mate. No one can fail to be impressed by the thoroughness with which Father Huntington devotes himself to meeting this earnest young mind. And for good measure, let us include passages from the young man himself, giving details of the relation.

We must have, later, some letters to those in trouble and illness; we will give examples of his delightful severity. There should be some extracts to show him applying his lofty yet canny wisdom to practical dilemmas. We will quote many short passages, flashes of illumination, often self-revealing as well as intrinsically beautiful and wise. There are cases where a correspondence goes on through many years, and betokens a relation of close intimacy; other letters are evidently unique or exceptional. But in every case, we find ourselves in the presence of a tender holiness to which no human experience is alien.

Holy Cross House  
Westminster, Maryland  
June 24, 1896

My dear child:

Your letter of June 16 puts the matter very clearly. "To cease to think of myself would be to cease to be myself." Precisely; and that is what you want. That, you must somehow achieve if you are to say with St. Paul "No longer I live, Christ liveth in me." The question is not whether you can improve *your* motive in doing what ought to be done but whether you can give up having any motive of your own, that the will of God may move you as the life of your life, the soul of your soul. What you need to learn now (but only God's Spirit can teach you) is that the whole matter is very much simpler than it seems. There is not something that you have

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to accomplish at some unknown point in the future. What needs to be done *has been* done long ago. All that reminder of self, that disowning of proprietary right in thought, word, or deed, that self-immolation,—all this was perfectly accomplished by our B. Lord. (You will find it all described in St. John, chapter five to ten inclusive.) And you have been personally united to Him, His life has been, is being, communicated to you, in order that His perfect example may find a fresh manifestation in your life. You cannot *give* yourself to God, any such *act* transcends your powers; but you can let *yourself be taken*, you can acknowledge the truth that you are His, you can declare that every moment of self-interest is intrinsically false, because it is acting as though you had a ground of your own on which to stand, a life of your own to live. You say that you constantly forget that God is the guide and governor of your life. I should say that you had not yet grasped in any solid fashion the fact that He *is* your Life, that our Lord is just as truly the Life of your soul as that your soul is the Life of your body.

I dare say you will simply not understand this now, but I am sure that God is teaching it you and you will understand it bye-and-bye. Meanwhile I advise you to pay little regard to your motives but be careful to *do the thing* that you feel to be right. If the devil suggests to you that you are doing it with a sneaking desire to be praised—by your husband for example—face him boldly and say, “Well, what if I am? It would be just like me if I did. But I am not counting on God’s acceptance of anything I do because I have such fine motives but because I am a member of Jesus Christ and you know that He did not act from self-interest for when you searched Him through and through in the Garden you could find nothing to lay hold of (“the Prince of this world cometh and *hath nothing in me*”) and you heard Him say “Not my will but Thine be done.” . . . I am glad you are abjuring “light literature.” . . . With regard to Church going I should think you would say your office at home Sunday mornings.

Faithfully in our Blessed Lord

## FATHER HUNTINGTON

July 19, 1896

My dear child:

Your letter came yesterday or day before. I think you are doing pretty well *considering*. With regard to the conversation I doubt if, under the circumstances, it is positively wrong for you to join with the others in much that seems petty and useless and nugatory. Perhaps your having to engage in it, and occasionally finding some pleasure in what is idle and foolish may be an occasion for humility and so you may gain more than you lose. Of course ill-natured criticism is distinctly wrong and you must root this out by faithfulness in self-examination. I think you should make your self-examination twice a day. (1) At the beginning of the hour when the baby is asleep—rehearsing what you have been saying during the morning (2) while washing your hands before supper—if there is no better time toward the end of the day.

But it will never do to go on any longer without learning to think before you speak. A great many women of your age have been forced—by the surroundings of their life—to learn this and you cannot afford not to learn it. Of course a sustained consciousness of the Presence of God would force you to think. It is not an impossible art, nor indeed so very difficult if you are patient and don't worry over it. It may be a help to practice first the sitting up straight when you speak, not leaning back upon the chair. The slight effort will tend to call in your wandering senses and center your attention on your task.

I do not think that Canon Knox will harm you but I do not fancy you will find that he wears very well. You will enjoy L\_\_\_\_\_, though at times he is a little aggravating, he so persists in being a Freudian.

You say that your prayers are mere words. I am sure you do not mean that you have no other intention in saying them than to repeat a certain number of syllables with no ulterior object in view. But, if you have any *intention* at all, you are exercising your will. And the will is, after all, the important human factor in prayer.

Loini de Blois says "But thou, my daughter, no matter how

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thou art pressed by temptations in prayers, go on in thy desire, with a good will and holy effort as well as thou canst, for desire and thy pious effort will be reckoned as effectual prayer." These points are suggested as to distraction:

1. Humble oneself with a look up to God
2. Be quiet.
3. Wait till end of prayer to see what was cause of distraction
4. At close of prayer make a short examen

The drowsiness is probably partly physical, partly spiritual—a direct result of Satan's effort to make you tired of meditation as useless and wasteful.

Holy Cross House  
Westminster, Maryland  
August 23, 1896

My dear child:

Your letter of last Sunday came safely. The trouble now seems to be that, while you are more in earnest, you are going at things in an *intellectual* way rather than in a *spiritual* fashion. I do not say this to discourage you, for I think you really are gaining, and the mistake is a very common one. You can easily recognize the distinction. Compare an undevout philosopher who might be talking about "God" all day in his class-rooms with some poor, suffering woman who could not hear the word without a flush of joy.

As to your feeling about "getting on" in your journeying, there will be no harm in that if your sentiments are those which an utterly penniless and helpless person would reasonably entertain who was being helped on to some distant point on the railway by gifts from the passengers and at the stations.

I do not wonder that you have, as yet, gained little in the way of control of speech. You must keep on trying. Of course it is God Who gives us all, without and within, but we must remember that, made in His Image, we have power to act through the use of His gifts, and that, by such activity, we call

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forth into more and more vigorous exercise the power that He bestows. As long as we are in a state of grace we have *substantial* charity within us, but we can only extend the dominion of Love in our souls by repeated *acts* of supernatural love, gradually establishing a habit of *affective* Charity toward God and effective toward man. For the present you should *act* as if the work to be done were all in your own power, and pray as if it were all in the hands of God.

Your *direct* efforts at discipline of speech have been pathetically ineffectual. But here, too, mere *thought* does not accomplish much whereas a little love would achieve a good deal. Or, if you cannot yet act through love, you might try fear. If your husband were in great distress at the death of someone near to him and you knew that any reference to the person would greatly increase his suffering I do not think you would be inconsiderate. Or if you knew that if you should say what would displease him he would knock you about and box your ears I know you would be careful.

So if you would try rather to recollect God's Goodness or His Justice ("for every idle word that men shall speak, etc.") and keep yourself *before Him* you would do better than merely to hold your tongue with so much self-consciousness—not to say self-centredness—that you make everyone notice you.

For your Meditation, try to make even *forced acts of the will* towards God rather than get a commentary on the Gospels and so try to procure more ideas that may be intellectually satisfying.

I am glad that you do at times loathe yourself. But remember that in doing so you are not farther from God, but *nearer*, for you are coming to see things a little as He sees them. That is what filled the Saints with self-abhorrence.

Perhaps this passage may be of some help. It is not expressed with theological accuracy.

"Man's progress towards the fine and good is the process of truth and goodness within him. It is the activity of the ideal. It is God lifting man up to Himself, or, in the language of philosophy, 'returning to Himself in history.' *And yet it is* at the same time man's effort after goodness."

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October 8, 1896

My dear child:

Your letter of September 18 reached me safely. You seem to be gradually learning the truth about yourself, about God and about your relation to Him. What you do not seem fully to grasp is the fact that we attain to God, not *in spite* of the circumstances of our lives—provided we are following His call, as you evidently are—but *by means* of them. We are to take those circumstances—dish-washing, bread-making, dinner-getting, etc. as the manifestation of His Will for us. And if He has already had them in His Mind and if they are part of His Purpose then there can be nothing “irreverent” in speaking to Him about them and asking His Strength to perform them acceptably—that is to perform them with reference to Him as their ultimate end. With God there is not the distinction between great and small that there is with us. All *apart* from Him is emptiness and nothing. All done, the very slightest thing, in accordance with His Will, through union with Him and for His Glory, has endless consequences of blessedness and joy. And in order to “realize Him” there must be this acting from Him as a Principle, to Him as an End. “*Finis est Principium.*” Multiply such acts, let the will move towards them ardently, earnestly and frequently, with a desire for God that is prompt, facile and sweet, and love will develop and you will know God. Remember, the process is by doing God’s Will to grow like Him, by growing like Him to know Him, by knowing Him to love Him, by loving Him to be united to Him, by being united with Him to work along with Him in the salvation of other souls.

I wonder that you should ask again “How can I remember when I don’t?” Surely the will has some power over the thought. What do you do when you know you must remember to give your baby some medicine half-an-hour later? You keep renewing the concentration of your attention upon that point so that there is a sort of sustained sensitiveness in that part of the brain and everything else is connected as it were with that area of sensitiveness so that it is Browning plus Baby, Hand-kerchief plus Baby, Door-bell plus Baby, etc.

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*The Monks of the West* by Montalembert would introduce you to many holy characters in a very wholesome and helpful way. . . . I think you had better make your confession every month.

### III

The foregoing correspondence continues intermittently through many years. The baby grows up; what shall be the date of his Confirmation? (Father Huntington was always in favor of an early date, not waiting for full maturity.) The husband, a teacher, is out of a job, there is great anxiety: "I shall try to see you sometime next month. Meanwhile, 'courage and confidence.' "

We must pass on. And the best introduction to the next group will be sentences from the correspondent, now a mature man of letters. The record begins while he is still a schoolboy:

"Father Huntington preached several times at St. George's. I was very impressed by his exposition of the Trinity and the Incarnation. I was then a soul working itself out of Unitarianism via theosophy. I had attended . . . School and had continued my opposition to Episcopalianism, but I was so thoughtful of religion and so disputatious that Mr. . . . (now a Roman Catholic) got Father Huntington to talk to me personally on two occasions. I said that I at length understood the idea of the Trinity, that it supplied what was lacking in Unitarianism without the labyrinth of complications of Theosophy. But Buddhism seemed quite as satisfactory a religion as Christianity. Father Huntington said the practice of Buddhism in the U.S.A. was out of the question; an individual who attempted it was doomed to affectation and eccentricity. Furthermore Christ was immeasurably superior to Buddha. The Buddhistic thought was fine in many ways,

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and should be absorbed into our thoughts as Greek philosophy was absorbed, but the superiority of Christianity to Buddhism was to be seen in symbolism,—the crucified Saviour, with outstretched arms supporting the whole world and embracing all mankind, versus the smug well-fed Buddha contemplating his own navel. I thought and still think the characterization of Buddha severe and sectarian, possibly ignorant. But the description of Christianity, the insistence that it was superior to any system of morality, because it dealt with more aspects and faculties of human nature, impressed me.

“I saw Father Huntington on a few occasions, and we held philosophical arguments,—largely on the exclusive nature of Christian salvation. I have never believed in this. Father Huntington did not deny that grace operated outside the Church. But he insisted on the necessity of sharing socially in an organized systematic way in the assured means of grace. Faith shrivels and dies without the Divine Society. He gave me the *Life* of his father to read. He told me of his early struggles to found the Order, and for the single tax. He said that as the life of the Church nourished and strengthened the soul, so the monastic life nourished and strengthened the Christian. But neither the Church nor the Cloister was incorruptible, only the long and endless struggle of reform kept them the instruments of Grace. He spoke of the necessity for me to keep thinking and living in relation to my impulse to make my communions. (I had been admitted to partake of the sacrament even as a Unitarian Theosophist.) He spoke of Brook Farm, and the road that leads from the revolt against individualist thought and living to Catholic living.

“When I entered Harvard, he had brought me to the point of desiring Confirmation.”

The first letter to this young aspirant was written during the summer after his freshman year. It is dated July 1, 1916:

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Will you forgive my delay in getting this answer off? I had hoped to send it day before yesterday.

I must go at once to your questions. Of course you will not expect any short and simple solution of your difficulties. No solution can be of much advantage to you which has not to a large extent been the result of working things out in your own mind. I cannot supply *that*. Truth cannot be put in as one gives a baby pap with a spoon (Even then the baby would be at pains to digest it).

Of course you are perfectly right in saying that back of everything else is the question of the relation between the soul and God. And the first thing I would ask you to consider is "Am I to start with myself or with God?" At the outset this question seems absurd. Here I am. I can pinch myself to make sure. As for God, that is another story. Perhaps I can prove He is there, perhaps I shall find I cannot. He may be only an idea in my mind, or He may be just a part of myself. Anyway it is I who must answer these questions, and therefore anyway I must begin with myself. And, yet, curiously enough, we did *not* begin with ourselves. We began as sons, that is to say our very origin required others who were when we were not, without whom we should not have been at all. You may say: "Oh that was only our physical origin." I don't admit that for a moment, but how about our intellectual beginning. Did we start with ideas and notions and theories of our own? Some human beings do; they are called "idiots," entirely *private persons* (to fall back on the Greek). But we began by looking away from ourselves, sharing in the common life, thinking the common thought. At first we objectivized ourselves ("He wants it." "He likes it.")

"The baby fresh to earth and sky  
What time his little hand is pressed  
Upon the circle of the breast,  
Has never thought that 'This is I.' "

Of course I am not depreciating self-consciousness. I am showing you that we do not *start* as individualists, that it may be that in these first origins we find a clue to what is most funda-

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mental to our very being, that we must recognize that we are *dependent*, that we do not originate with but receive it, that we need Another, that it is with that Other that we begin.

I am so grateful for your invitation to your house. I wish I might meet your dear mother.

The next letter, with its competent summary of the doctrine of the Fall of Man, irresistibly suggests a sombre and famous passage in Newman's *Apologia*: a passage which includes one of the greatest sentences in English Literature.

"Starting out then with the Being of God, . . . I look out of myself into the world of men, and there I see a sight which fills me with unspeakable distress. . . . To consider the world in its length and breadth" (the great sentence rolls on) . . . "all this is a vision to dizzy and appall and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery which is absolutely beyond human solution.

"What shall be said to this heart-piercing, reason-bewildering fact? I can only answer that either there is no Creator, or this living society of men is in a true sense discarded from His presence. . . . If there be a God, *Since* there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal catastrophe."<sup>1</sup>

So far Newman: now, Father Huntington:

July 31, 1916

What you say in the early part of your last letter is most true. "God is not a symbol of goodness. Goodness is a symbol of God." The heathen knew quite well that they did not come in contact with Reality, with God. They arrived only at thought and ideas in their own minds about Him. . . . All the great ethnic religions, all the heathen mysteries, all the dark superstitions of earlier or later times, all the hideous rites of

<sup>1</sup> *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*. By John Henry, Cardinal Newman. Longmans, Green & Co., N. Y., 1883; p. 241.

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savage tribes—Mumbo Jumbo and all the rest, have been efforts men have made to attain Reality, to get through to God.

Is it not necessary for us to ask—even if we feel no sense of separation ourselves—what is the meaning of all these abortive efforts? For their ever-renewed succession is proof of their futility. If man is made for God, if he needs God as the eye needs light and the lungs air, why is it so difficult to get at God, why this age-long disappointment?

One thing it seems to me we ought to hold to, as long as we honestly can. That is that the hindrance, or obstacle or barrier, or whatever we may call it, is not on the side of God. . . . Unless we can look to Another than ourselves as Truth and Goodness and Love we must either make ourselves God, which is madness, or dream of escape from Him which is despair. . . . Somehow or other things do seem to have gone wrong in the case of man as they do not seem to have gone wrong in the world of animals or vegetables or minerals. Man has been capable of something indefinitely beyond the sentient world beneath him and he has failed more disastrously than the denizens of that world have done. “Man is an animal with an ideal,” but he has not been true to the ideal. He has powers that might unite him with God, but he has misused those powers. He is conscious of a conflict within him for he knows the right and still does the wrong. “The evil that I would not that I do” is an almost universal confession; individuals, favoured by birth and training, may have little sense of it, but to the vast majority of human beings, it is an instinctive self-condemnation.

Can you go along with this? If not, let me know.

A few sentences may be given from another letter, too long to quote in its entirety.

En route, November 20, 1916

As is so often the case in such discussions, both you and your chum seem to me to be right in what you affirm, and at variance rather as to what you are disposed to *deny*.

First, as to your chum's statement. There is a sense in which

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Man is capable of becoming divine. St. Nilus said: "I will strive and strive, until the power of the Incarnation make me a god." St. Peter declares of the Christians to whom he writes that they might become "partakers of the Divine Nature." Man was created in the *image* of God, that he might *attain* to the likeness of God. But this does not mean that an individual man, independent of God and in isolation from his fellows can be like God, as a bit of bric-à-brac can be "like" a Greek temple, because it is copied after it. Rather it means that Man can be like God through the manifestation, in his created nature, of the Truth, Goodness, Love which God is. Jesus Christ is the *perfect* manifestation of the Divine Truth, Goodness, Love in that Manhood, by participation in which each of us is a human being. He is Perfect Man as well as Perfect God. . . .

Christ is our Way to the Father. He says: "No man cometh to the Father but by Me." To enter into reunion with Him is not to forfeit our own personality, for He in His Person is God and therefore Infinite. It is in God that our personality can reach its true development. . . .

Our human nature is renewed and rehabilitated by the communication to us of Christ's glorified Manhood. That Manhood in us all makes us one Body in Him.

You are right in recognizing in Christ the *non posse peccare*. To man it belonged *posse non peccare*, provided he remained in loyal obedience to God. Man was not created with an "imperfect will" in the sense that he could not help doing wrong. Or, rather, at once, upon his creation, he was endowed with a supernatural power to resist temptation, *posse non peccare*. . . . But the whole human race cannot supply for itself one atom of truth, one principle of right, one sufficient object of love. Perhaps your chum has not grasped this. It is fundamental.

Have I understood your difficulty?

A gap in the letters. Much water meantime flowed under the bridge. With disarming frankness, the one-time student now tells what happened to him during the ordeal of the war, and the thoroughly characteristic reaction of Father Huntington:

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"I visited the Holy Cross Monastery twice or thrice again, and never shall forget the sensation of gayety with which I passed a month in New York City afterward. I was impelled to take orders, even in fancy to become a monk. My family talked me out of it. I agreed to wait until I was twenty-five. My impulse was a reflection of the war-time upheavals. I had become a conscientious objector at Plattsburg. I was determined not to fight. I was frightened of prison. I went to Holy Cross and asked Father Huntington whether I could be ordained; was it proper for me to seek sanctuary in the Church? He said [one can imagine his face] that no bishop would ordain me. That it was improper, and likely to be a mere cowardly temptation on my part; (I rejoiced when he said this). . . . Too often he had been put at disadvantage by men who came and told him that they had the certainty of vocation, when he knew that they were miserable specimens of humanity. He himself sometimes wondered whether he had not more of a vocation to be a superior than to be a monk. (!) He said I was taking a great risk in removing myself from the common experience of other soldiers. But that if warfare in this war was against my conscience, then I must take my medicine.

"He explained sadly that our correspondence could not continue as frequently as it had. . . . Other souls claimed his time." [A unique instance of withdrawal!]

"We had a good laugh when I told him that his letter so blunt about seeking Roman instruction, (see p. 250) was a shock to me. He called my bluff and said so. He said that it was frivolous to seek for a perfect machine to do God's work for Him and us. I knew that through the Anglican Church Grace opened up for me. To deny it would be to blaspheme. Take hold upon what the Church gives. Do not seek a perfect Church."

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Letters of 1920 follow, concerned again with theological discussion. We will content ourselves with one or two sentences from a letter of February 28:

What James says in his *Will to Believe* does seem rather like a *tour de force*. But he should be taken, I think, as simply meeting the objections raised by the *intellect* (in the more limited exercise), as in the saying that reason is never more reasonable than when it recognizes its own limitations. Faith begins where James leaves off. Of course there are many persons in whom the intellect raises no such difficulty as he meets. And one can, if he will, simply set aside the complaint of the intellect and go at once to the exercise of faith. "A ghost raised by the intellect can only be laid by the intellect." But we need not forever be laying ghosts; we can simply walk through them.

I think I see now what you mean about miracles being too easy; you mean it as a sort of cutting the Gordian knot, that is, it is a summary process, which might lead to the atrophy of intellect through disuse. But miracles are not simply introduction of the supernatural to save one the trouble of thinking. Miracles are "signs," and signs required to be recognized by the intellect. Our Lord never wrought an *unnecessary* work; whatever He did had a meaning and a purpose. The "miraculous" explanation of the origin of the Christian Faith and Church would have to be one that would harmonize with the whole revelation that God has made of His Character and Providence. This is Butler's argument in his *Analogy*.

Irrelevant to the foregoing intellectual disquisitions, but thoroughly representative of his methods in dealing with people, is the following anecdote:

A woman came to Father Huntington once for counsel and help. "Father, I am in great distress. My health has begun to fail and I am afraid I shall lose my position." "Yes,—and what then?" "You don't understand, Father; I have no one to support me. I am wholly dependent on holding my position. I

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have nothing else." Again he said: "And what would happen if you did lose your position?" "Why,—you don't seem to realize. *I Would Starve.*" "And couldn't you starve, my daughter? Other people have starved to death. Couldn't you?" Silence for a few moments, and then light broke in her face: "Why, of course I could. Yes—I could starve to death if I have to. I have been afraid to face it. Now I can. You have set me free. I am not afraid of *Anything* now."

She regained her health and did not lose her position.

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CHAPTER XVIII

*SELECTIONS FROM LETTERS*

I

**I**T is hard to turn aside from Father Huntington's own words. Extracts from a few more of his letters must be given:

To one troubled by the apathy and the apparent inconsistencies and failures of the Church:

"Have you sufficiently considered that all through the centuries, (as shown through both the old and new Testaments) it is rarely that more than a 'remnant' among those outwardly in covenanted relation with God, have been right in their conception of Him and of His demands upon men? I suppose that the matter is not really as simple as that. There are apt to be several 'remnants,' one right as to certain things, and another right as to certain others. Certainly there is great variety among the saints. Even St. Peter and St. Paul did not quite hit it off with one another,—for a time at least."

That passage outdoes Matthew Arnold in subtlety. It is especially pertinent today, when both in practical issues and in ideologies, bewilderment besets the minds of all unconventional thinkers.

Extracts from letters written in 1914 to the Bishop of the Windward Islands, whom he had known in England as a youth at Kelham, give interesting hints of his attitude toward the situation of the Episcopal Church in the United States:

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“I am puzzled by your friend’s state of mind. Can it be that he has come across a very small, schismatic body over here, called ‘The Reformed Episcopal Church’? It split off from the Church under a Bishop Cummins some thirty years ago. No pains were taken to ensure a valid ministry, and the body seems to have been remarkably successful in ridding itself of anything not markedly Protestant. Its Prayer-Book is so thoroughly sterilized that I doubt if the most powerful microscope could find a ‘Romanizing germ’ between the covers.

“The American Church, (The legal title is ‘The Protestant Episcopal Church’) is no more divided, as your friend seems to think, than the Church of England. There are fine gradations in the way of teaching and ritual, all the way from extreme Low Church subjectivism, and Broad Church vagueness, to full Catholic feeling and practise. On the whole the Church over here is less consciously Protestant than the Church of England, and we have almost no parishes,—certainly none that are at all conspicuous,—where there is any real imitation of Rome,—any sultry piety or hectic devotion.”

“In my early days,” writes the Lord Bishop, “when I was struggling to achieve ordination, I often used to cheer myself with his words to me: ‘After all it is not so much where you are as what you are, that counts.’” . . . To how many people some slight, almost incidental saying of Father Huntington has been as a lamp giving steady light upon the upward path!

But let us give some passages of more direct and personal counsel:

“I think that your misgivings arise, not from your faults, or sins of which you are not conscious, but from your need to

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make a fresh step onward in your way of prayer. Such a step, at any advance, at any stage of the Christian life, is apt to be accompanied by some uncertainty and dissatisfaction."

"Try and remember that we must be generous in giving God not only our submission but our trust."

By no means did he always strike notes of encouragement or approval; witness the delightful severity of this next letter to a dear spiritual daughter to whom he had been writing long and earnestly, first urging her to be confirmed, rejoicing in her decision, urging her to Confession; and finally at this point as will be seen using the frank prerogatives of a spiritual father:

"It is nice to be able to send you a line by the hand of Father —. He has just been telling me how much good you are accomplishing for God's poor and needy ones round about you. But I cannot help being afraid that you sometimes handicap what you do by too brusque or dictatorial a manner, or by momentary loss of temper. Will you let me give you a principle that, if carried out with faithfulness, would along with the grace of the Holy Spirit make a big difference?

*"Before All Things the End Must Be Considered, and According to the End Our Course Must Be Directed.*

"You have a keen mind, and a real discernment into human character. Try, then, in dealing with anyone to get first a clear idea of what result you would like to find accomplished, and then ask yourself 'What is the most likely course to produce that result, the person being what he (or she) is?' You know what would be *Least* likely to make the person choose what you wish, therefore choose the opposite. Some people are humble enough to be softened by reproof, some

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would be hardened into antagonism by it. Some persons would be cowed by threats, others would be intensified in (self-will?) Don't build barriers in your own way. 'A word to the wise.' "

It must have been a pleasure to this correspondent, when years later, in 1930, she received a little note: "If you have never done anything else in your life, I should think that what you had done for Lucy — would make your heart jump for joy. She shows a good deal of herself in this letter and it is a self full of promise. . . . We must not lose contact now that we have seen each other in the light of what God means for you and through you."

Here is a series, outspoken and tender, from a much larger number covering many years. Such letters are often preserved as the chief treasure of a lifetime.

August 1900

"Would it not be well for you to draw up a Rule of Life adapted to your present position, and prospects, and let me look it over? I prefer to have people draw up the Rule themselves."

"Your letter distresses me. It does seem very dreadful that you should go on in this way. It would seem to me far better that your confessor should know your needs. But I can not refuse you any help that it would be to you to come to me. . . .

"I wish that I could lift you up and set you on your feet, but it is not enough for you to *Receive* grace, you must *Use* it."

"I have blessed the little Crucifix and am returning it. . . . I think that I realize something of the way in which temptation presses upon you, yet I cannot but doubt whether you are really making against it the effort that you might make

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if you would. I dare say that you *Think* you are doing all you can but I doubt if this is really the case. It seems as if you might go away to your own room and fight these tempers down before your Crucifix. But I fancy you do not even attempt to do that.

“It is wonderfully good of God to let you go back to . . . and I hardly see how you can *Claim* anything there, since your being there at all is a miracle of Divine and human forbearance.”

“What you say encourages me much about you, for you seem to be taking a reasonable and submissive view of the situation. As long as I can feel that you are trying I will gladly do all I can to help you. But sometimes it seems as if you expected other people to do for you what you only can do in coöperation with God’s grace.”

“I am much encouraged by what you tell me of yourself. I enclose the papers of the C.C.L. Surely with this Rule as a start you can do something toward framing your own. Here are some points:

- Prayer to be said on rising
- Morning prayers in private
- Meditation
- Additional Communions
- Special observance of Friday
- Questions for Self-examination at night
- Special devotions in the event of an ugly mood, etc.
- List of intercessions,—persons, objects, etc.

“Do your best to send to me next week.”

“I am sorry to hear of this ordeal through which you must pass next week. . . . I am sending you your Rule with some

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things stricken out. They are good in themselves, but as you have been so unfaithful I think it is better that you should attempt less and do more. Will you write me every two weeks after your confession, how you have kept up."

"What has helped me not to work when I ought to rest has been the consideration of the vast amount that there was to accomplish and the small amount that I could do if I never ate or slept. Say the amount to be done is 1,000,000, that by overworking you could do 60 and by reasonable work 50. Now is it worth while for 100,000 to run the very probable risk of so overdoing as to lose your soul? If one could do half a million it might seem possibly right, but our one hundred thousandth is too insignificant a gain."

"I hope that you will use this time of convalescence to some lasting spiritual gain. Such a time is apt to have dangers of its own. The coming in of fresh vitality and time requires grace to sanctify and supernaturalize it. You know how that should be done."

"Thank you very much for your letter of last Thursday. It adds brightness to our Holy Cross Festival. *I have* had your name in my prayers every night, but I have felt a certain horror when I have thought of our last interview. That one who has had such a knowledge of the Catholic faith and has had so many tokens of God's forbearance and love, should with open eyes give herself over to the devil seemed very ghastly. I am so thankful to know that you have come to a better mind. I feel sure that you have made your confession."

1905

"I am remembering you in my prayers today. I hope this is the beginning of a clear year for you. I can feel with you

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for last Sunday was *My* birthday, the day of the week too, for I was a 'Sunday Child,' born just as the bells were ringing for service."

1906

"I am glad you have a nice room. So much depends upon having a place where you can be apart from the world, with God and His angels as your only room-mates. Try to make your room a real Oratory, by saying a little prayer every time you enter or leave it."

## II

Let us listen to a refreshing and generous note of leniency. To one who had proposed to withdraw from the C.C.L. because she had been lax in keeping the Rule:

"I am rejoiced that you have kept on with the C.C.L., and I am sure that your name is still on the roll. As to your spiritual needs and difficulties there are several things to be said.

"It is, I am sure, important to distinguish between *ends* and *means*. The one supreme end is God, to know Him, to love Him, to be in union with Him. But God is not an abstraction. He is not the Great Emptiness but the Great Fullness. We really *do* meet Him everywhere and in every one. No doubt, in order to become more and more conscious of Him we are under obligation, *so far as we can*, to use the means of Recollection, Prayer, Sacraments, which ordinarily furnish special channels of communion with Him. Yet these are *means*, He Himself is the End. *Wilful* neglect of appointed means is one thing, *inability* to use them as we would is another. As we go on in life the pressure increases, and elasticity lessens. Hence we do not *seem* to be doing so much in the way of

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devotion; yet our wills may be more steadfastly and habitually and instinctively alluring to God. In you this is evidenced by the penitence with which you have left the C.C.L. rule, and kept track of your omissions. That represents a vast number of acts of the will, of which God was the Object. He will not be unmindful of such a labour of love."

To one under heavy strain. A letter written from Cowley St. John, England, dated July 19, 1907.

"I think that you are mistaking one thing for another when you say the condition of things at \_\_\_\_\_ 'shakes your faith.' Your heart is bruised, your mind is stunned, your hope is assaulted, and you are assuming, from the distress that all this involves, that your faith is diminished. But faith is *what*? Not faith in cleanliness and truth and reason and right, else why do you shudder at that which contradicts them? There can be no shadow without a sun. Not faith in the final supremacy of reason and goodness and love, else you should envy . . . as being on the successful side, that which has the future. You do not envy them, you pity them. Not faith in an infinite, that is a divine, goodness and love that compassionates and yearns over them, for you know that if you had been a better woman, had been true to the likeness of God, you would care for these poor children not less but *more*; that, therefore, He must care *most*. Not faith in the great Christian verities, for you know that it is your love that makes you suffer, and yet that makes you willing to suffer yet more if thereby you can help them, so that since by the word 'God' we mean One Who is Infinite (infinite in love as well as in power and wisdom, else were He not infinite at all) He must needs be a suffering God, consummating His Will in a supreme act of sacrificial love. Not faith in prayer, for that is the

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one way in which you can reach your dear one, and that not from without but within, your soul in contact with her heart and will, drawing her towards truth and right as you, in prayer, lay fresh hold upon Him."

It is interesting to note his consistently large-minded, temperate, yet firm attitude toward Sacramental Confession. His desire was steady that the use of this means of grace be more widely understood and prevalent among the faithful; his letters are full of appointments for this purpose, or when he was not himself available of recommendations to resort to this or another brother priest.

"Will you come to see me at the clergy house at the hour you mention? I will try to see you so that you may return at once. I cannot think that you would be acting wisely to return from practice to theory."

He took infinite pains to meet the convenience of his penitents. But on the other hand, his wide common sense and sense of relative values is in evidence. He put first things first as this brief Holy Week letter shows:

"Thank you for your letter. I hope that it will enable me to do more to help you. It would seem as though these next three days must bring to you the realization that the only way to life is through death, that the death which Our Lord accomplished for you must be accomplished *In* you that you may walk in the newness and unearthliness of His Risen Life.

"I think that you should make your Confession at St. Clements before Easter, if you can find time to prepare carefully. But I do not think you have committed any mortal sin since you saw me, and if you cannot manage it I hope that you will still make your Easter Communion."

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"Your note of last Monday reached me safely. I think that I quite understand how you feel, and I am sure that you want to do what is right.

"What confuses many minds in regard to the Sacrament of Penance is the failure to recognize the tremendous distinction between venial and mortal sin, between what St. John speaks of as 'a sin unto death' and 'a sin not unto death.' "

"Mortal sin is a sin committed (1) with full consciousness of what one is doing in contradicting God's Will (2) with full deliberation and purpose to resist Him (3) in a grave matter. Such a sin must cut the soul off from God, and it is to restore a soul after so grievous a fall that our Blessed Lord left the Sacrament of Penance to His Church. Even Rome declares that there is no *Divine Precept* requiring anyone to go to confession except in the case of having committed a mortal sin. (Rome has an ecclesiastical precept which requires all her members to go to Confession at Easter.)

"Now it is altogether possible that you have never committed mortal sin. If so, you can hardly expect to feel any necessity to make confession, although of course you would be at liberty to do so and it might be very helpful to you.

"I cannot but feel that the Sacrament of Penance is the *special, normal, appointed* remedy for mortal sin.

"I think that I could make this whole matter plain to you if you would come and see me."

"What God desires to see is our longing for His grace and our desire to coöperate with it, even more than our accomplished virtue."

"The future is given us to be a region of hope, not of fear."

"One cannot expect to know what love is until one has it, but duty . . . the surrender of one's own will, . . . is the way thereto."

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Now a few passages of practical advice:

"I realize that it is a good deal of responsibility to advise you. But I want to be of any help I can. The question is, principally, how far you have the power of adapting yourself to quite different conditions than those that are now familiar, though not ideal. In almost any such change, the things we expected to be hard prove endurable, the things we expected to be at least tolerable if not actually agreeable, are some of them the things that rub, or utterly unforeseen adverse circumstances discover themselves. On the whole, I think you could do it, for a year anyway."

"The situation as you describe it seems rather difficult. My first thought is that P.V. is probably as much of an enigma to himself as he is to his father and the rest of the world. I don't at all believe that he has found himself, or Another. His present attitude is, in part at least, an experiment of the various possibilities of existence. Something as a younger boy might squeeze a kitten, to see what would happen. Very likely the experiment costs P.V. a good deal of discomfort, but that is part of this particular possibility to be tested.

'Very full of dreams, that desert,  
But my two legs took me through it,  
And I used to watch 'em moving  
With the toes all black and raw.'

"That the experiment should cost *You* suffering, does not so deeply affect P.V. Youth such as his is strangely tolerant of the discomfort of older people, who have found life more or less disappointing and may be presumed to have adjusted themselves to the disagreeableness of it.

"I should advise you to go on, without very much reference to P. V.'s likes or dislikes, his moods or whims. He can

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hardly order you out of his father's house. If he did, and worst came to worst, I should advise you to claim all that belongs to you in any way, and let him feel what is slipping away from him and what he will have to face. But that would be a last resort."

"I hope that patience and courage are granted you. I know that the thought will come, 'Why was I brought here with things so unsettled and confused?' But God builds silently, and builds His glorious Temple out of separate lives, fashioning them for their place in His great plan when they seem to themselves to be kept at one side or piled up in some disordered heap. The one need is to give oneself day by day for the development of the supernatural life and the deepening of the Divine Likeness. All else is of little account. 'The Son of Man had not where to lay His head.' Shall we ask for an earthly mansion? We seek one to come."

Finally, let us group extracts from a few letters to those facing some specially sharp ordeal: to the ill, to the dying, to those in deep bereavement. In the letters that come to hand, those of condolence outnumber all others. It is impossible to read even these brief quotations without perceiving reverently and gratefully how profound was Father Huntington's knowledge of what suffering should mean to the Christian.

He was a great Consoler; for he never used soft words. There is a devastating monotony about human sorrows; but to a remarkable degree he avoided the platitude. Even the most obvious reflections as he presented them seemed imbued with a reality born of his own experience.

"These are they that came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes white from every stain of selfishness and pride in the Blood of the Lamb, in the tears they have

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mingled with His Who renounced for all sins and errors of men.

“I should like you to make three communions a week for the present. You are glorifying the Lord in the fires, and you need to keep very close to Him.”

“Try to realize that such sorrow and suffering as are yours is a unique opportunity to witness to the victory of Our Lord in His Passion and His Cross.”

“Just a word to make my meaning a little clearer. The thought in my mind in writing ‘Try to live up to the dignity of this suffering’ was more largely ‘Do not yield to the feeling that this action on the part of others has involved you in circumstances that, in exposing you to the impertinent or pitying gaze of strangers, lowers you in your own eyes, makes your life seem to you less noble, lessens your self-reverence.’

“I do not know *just* how far any such temptation has come to you. I was thinking rather of the positive side, of your coming to appreciate the privilege of pain, the magnificence of wearing even for an hour His robe of misrepresentation and scorn.

“I am sure that you are going to be very generous with God and that as this sharp and bitter north wind blows upon the garden you tend for Him it will be met by the south wind of His Spirit and the spices will flow out and the pleasant fruits that He delights in will ripen in their time.”

This next letter is to one facing a major operation:

“Your letter came to me out here, and you are often in my thoughts and prayers. I shall be anxious to have news of you. . . I wish that I might come to you, but I cannot see my way to do so until week after next, and perhaps it will not

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be possible then. But it is a great blessing at such a time as this to feel that we are at a point of relationship, in the spiritual bonds of father and child, that even distance does not really separate us.

“Be sure, if you are to pass on, that you give me the help of your prayers. I may have years of exile yet, and you will be so safe and sure that you will want to do what you can to help me to keep faithful to the end.

“And I shall not forget your dear sister.”

“It is a grief to think that your life has grown so grey and cheerless. But I am convinced that your work can be done, even when there is no consciousness of joy. It is the experience of many souls, apparently, that the thrill of delight in the beauty of the world about us passes away as life goes on, and our relations with other souls grow more and more intense, more capable of giving happiness or pain. And, I suppose, that to most people the pain that comes through others is keener than the happiness. The art of all arts is to turn such pain into joy. You are doing so, but at present you have no consciousness of it. And that is hard.”

To one in deep anxiety:

“I do hope for your dear sister’s recovery, and give my prayers to that end or to something better still.”

“Your note of last Monday reached me this morning. My heart goes out in sympathy with you in this great sorrow which seems to be sweeping towards you. But I know there will be joy as well as pain, and that your heart will be all the more surely bound to that eternal home ‘where true joys are to be found.’ ”

## SELECTIONS FROM LETTERS

“Your letter of last Friday came this morning. I am very glad to know that you have met this sorrow with such courage and resolution to keep on with the work before you. Truly there must be some compensation in the assurance that your dear sister passed as a Christian should, ‘fortified by the sacraments of the Church.’ May I have her first name, and I will offer a Requiem for her. It is through such experiences as these, hard as they are, that the veil between this world and the next wears thin. May the dear soul rest in peace.”

(The sister who died was a Roman Catholic.)

The next letter, not to the same person as the last, is of March 1926:

“In regard to your feeling that it is not *Just* that your sister should suffer as she has done, I am sure you are right. But whose *Injustice* is it? God did not introduce suffering and death into the human race, and as long as people are left free to choose right or wrong some of them in this world will choose wrong, with consequences that will mean pain for other people. To put it rather harshly, I suppose that you can remember a few instances in which you acted in a way which brought needless suffering upon others. When you look back upon such acts, you are sure that God did not mean you to do them. Yet you were free to do them in spite of Him. Could He continually have overruled your willfulness, and prevented you from making wrong choices, and still left you a moral being? Or could He have interfered so that whatever you did, others need not have suffered through you? But would not that have deprived you of one great incentive to righteousness, by taking away the sense of responsibility to others? Perhaps you say: ‘But my sister’s sufferings are not due to other human beings.’ How can you know that? And are there not other than human wills which may bring

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suffering? Did not Our Lord suffer being tempted, in the desert? There were no men or women there."

The echo from Milton to the effect that "God did not introduce suffering and death into the human race" will seem dubious even to some would-be orthodox minds. But how noble and far-reaching the defense of human freedom! Here, as in the following brief extract, there is freshness to the presentation, in spite of the familiarity of the argument.

"I wish I could help you to believe that if we follow Our Lord it must be in the Way of the Cross. That must mean some form of suffering, and surely we can not of ourselves judge what form of suffering the Cross will take. That must be true of those we love as well as of ourselves. The time will come when we shall see cause to give thanks for what has come to them and has been over-ruled for their good, as well as what has come to ourselves."

Finally, a grave and glorious passage, to which one well may hear an inward accompaniment of Bach's Passion Music:

"Such suffering as God has called you to bear, such a drawing apart into the sanctuary of His own lonely Agony, makes almost any words, above all written words, seem utterly pale and meaningless. And so I have taken up your letter again and again, and have laid it down with a sense of inability to make any adequate answer. What I should like to say if I had the power would be something of the honour God puts upon a soul to which He reaches out a chalice so strangely mingled with sweetness as of Heaven and bitterness as of death and the grave. The response to such a gift, it would seem, should be a life of heroic PRAISE. Have you tried that? I have found people who could pray only with great difficulty, but to whom a new world seemed to open as they began to praise. 'We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.'"

+

CHAPTER XIX

*THE PORTAL OF LIFE*

I

THE river of time flowed on. Father Huntington was an old man. Nothing could better express what he meant to younger men and groups than a poem<sup>1</sup> written by Bishop Spencer of Western Missouri on the occasion of an address given in Advent 1930 to the Conference of Young Bishops at the College of Preachers in Washington:

He came to lecture us, young bishops, in the Close.  
“My Fathers . . . ,” he said,  
And on that meekest head  
We marked the haloed glory of its snows.  
But in his eyes  
The fire of youth ne’er dies,  
Like Him whom John in Revelation knows.  
“White like wool . . . and eyes a flame of fire.”  
Gat he these because he did aspire  
So long to be,  
O Christ, like Thee!

He came to Chapel and read us from the Word.  
Not what he read  
So much our spirits fed—  
Rather, as if a light, undimmed, unblurred,  
Burned upward from the Book,  
Making his face to look

<sup>1</sup> This poem by Bishop Spencer originally appeared in “The Living Church,” Milwaukee, Wis.

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All shining with the Light to which the page referred.  
Shone there that light because his feet oft stirred,  
Like Moses', to mount  
Upward on Thy account!

At other times he came with us to meditate:  
"Faith," "Hope," and "Love,"  
And now like an eagle, now a dove,  
His words now slow, and now precipitate,  
Brooded Religion's store,  
Upward with poets bore,  
Until they stood within the jewelled gate.  
God, is this kind  
By years of labor mined!

Refection came: we came to know his wit.  
"He knows," we said,  
"How to make our bread  
Sweet with the very pleasant joy of it.  
His cloistered heart  
Knows too life's jovial part.  
How good that he should deign to harbor it!  
Saint, wit, and sage—  
Gave God this heritage!"

## II

Doubtless to Father Huntington, as to all the aged, the backward glance showed distance in a shortened perspective, revealing not only personal but racial experience close at hand as it were in the endless movement of the onflowing years. For in age, the Crusades, let us say, or the American Revolution, or the events of the sacred years when the Saviour walked on earth, become strangely integrated with personal recollections. Such are the compensations of growing old. Memory is selective in these wide ranges. To Father Huntington, the

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most vivid phases of the past will have been those when the glow of the supernatural and eternal shone clearest through dim, time-woven veils, and light fell on the great persons and events in Catholic Christendom as Christianity came to its own.

Surely his personal experience, too, was living in him. Perhaps thought often returned to the moment of his childhood when, as he clung to his father's hand one Christmas Eve in Cambridge, the melody of ancient Christmas hymns first stole on his little ears. Surely he recalled his gay, boyish days, tramping over the New England hills, or giving joy at home to his little sisters and his housemates; his college life; the awakening to his Religious vocation at a Retreat in Philadelphia; the early ministry in the little chapel at Syracuse; the solemn hour of his Religious Profession; the years of gallant fighting for justice, in the spirit of the petition, *Thy Kingdom come on earth*; the slow surrender of hopes for fellowship in that consecrated effort, the acceptance of all negative disciplines, denials, and frustrations, and finally the long sweep of years dedicated to the building up of his Order on the lines permitted by the Holy Will of God, and to the quiet inward labors of helping individual souls to the new birth.

“Joy and woe are woven fine,  
A clothing for the soul divine:  
Under every grief and pine  
Runs a joy with silken twine,”

sang William Blake. Those long memories, perquisite of age, can blend even the discords of the past into its great harmony. Perhaps,—who knows?—they are a foretaste of that waiting life when we shall

“Hold infinity in the palm of our hand,  
And eternity in an hour.”

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He was a vigorous old man, and, like many elderly people, he dwelt on what was happening to him with a sort of amused incredulity. So, on February 22, 1931, he wrote:

"I, too, look forward to weighing anchor before long. I am seventy-seven years old next July, (I do not feel nearly that). But I want to keep on deck till the Summons comes." And he continues, referring to Whitman's great lines:

"Joy, Shipmate, joy!  
(Pleased, to my soul at death I cry)  
Our life is closed, our life begins;  
The long, long anchorage we leave,  
The ship is clear at last, she leaps!  
She swiftly courses from the shore;  
Joy, Shipmate, joy!"

On his birthday, July 23, 1932: "I am very well, thanks be to God, and able to do nearly as much as ever, albeit with somewhat slackened pace. I need your prayers very much, that I may make some real spiritual progress in this New Year. There is so much yet to do!"

("My brothers, now let us begin to be Christians," said Francis of Assisi on his death-bed. Life- and youth-preserving is the sense of the Future.) A little note of wistfulness creeps in, when he says that he does not know if he is tired, or just old; but the picture on the whole is heartening. And the impression he made on others is happily conveyed in the following letter from one of his friends:

"I was in a Unitarian hospital near Boston where there was little interest in our Episcopal Church. I had not told Father Huntington of my operation. But he had heard of it at the Adelynrood Retreat, and to my delighted surprise appeared in my room, having, as was his way, added this visit to his

## THE PORTAL OF LIFE

crowded day. After he left, the Unitarian nurse in charge asked: 'Who *Is* that man?' I told her, adding: 'You think I have friends who dress strangely, don't you?'—for she had brought some Sisters and Religious to my bed-side. I have never forgotten her reply: 'It would never matter what that man wore! He could wear anything he chose. He shed peace and power wherever he walked, even in the corridor outside your room.'"

The letters of the later years breathe more and more a beautiful humility. There came a great day when he was allowed to know a little of what his life had meant to others. For in 1934, when he was eighty years old, on the fiftieth anniversary of his profession, expressions of love and gratitude poured in on him. "I was simply swamped," he wrote, "by the scores and scores of letters and messages that came to me as I rounded out my half century. Please say a prayer, that I may have been pardoned for all that was amiss in the past, perseverance in the future, and peace at the last." Many of his brief and touching replies are cherished by the recipients:

"I do feel that the half century has piled up a great deal for which to give thanks, yet the memory of it brings the sense of many failures and errors for which one needs forgiveness. I shall be deeply grateful for your prayers on my behalf, at the offering of the Holy Sacrifice next Sunday."

"I have an immense amount to be thankful for in the past eighty years, but I am also weighed upon with the sense of my vast responsibilities. So say a prayer for me next Monday. I pray for you twice every day, once at the Altar."

"The past brings many memories, some glad, some sorrowful, and a sense of having a great deal for which to answer."

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“Thank you with all my heart for your letter of last Sunday. It is a peculiar happiness to hear from one who so fully understands the bitter-sweet of such a commemoration as his half century brings. There is indeed a vast deal for which to give thanks, but also memories that need forgiveness. I know you pray that I may have pardon, perseverance, and peace at the last. I have been praying for you daily, asking that you may have Obedience, Courage, Health, Support.”

Especially moving are two letters to one with whom relations in the past had been tinged with sadness. The first, antedating by two years those last given, bears date of January 14, 1932:

“My very dear Father —: Your letter touches me deeply, for I have never forgotten you, or ceased to feel affection for you. I have had you in my prayers every night. I have had no news of you for several years. I am most grateful to God that you have not passed from this world before your mistake in leaving the Community came home to you. I have had you daily in my prayers at the altar, and have longed for just what now comes to pass.

“I suppose you know that Father — came back to his allegiance a year ago, and seems very happy in his life at Holy Cross. The Father Superior is now at St. Andrews.”

Then in December, 1934:

“What you say of yourself touches my heart with sympathy, and longing to ‘steal some fever from your grief.’ I can feel with you, for though fifty years brings a vast deal for which to be thankful, yet also there are memories of failure and error that need forgiveness. And I look back with keen regret at what perhaps I might have done to save you from

## *THE PORTAL OF LIFE*

what stirs you to self-reproach. But for us both there is assurance of forgiveness, and of peace at the last."

As late as Easter, 1934, he wrote:

"I am very well, thanks be to God, and suffer from no disabilities incident to old age, unless it be a little increase of forgetfulness now and then."

It is good to linger on the figure of Father Huntington at this time, when the fullness of his physical powers seemed unimpaired, and his inner consciousness was in the phase like that of a summer Northern night, when the lingering radiance of a day that has passed melts into the promise of a new day that is to be. We have seen that he still pressed toward the mark, that his spirit still faced the future. There could be no more perfect comment on this man of God than one of his own meditations, given to his spiritual sons at Holy Cross. He was speaking of their ministry to youth, but the passage holds the revelation of his own nature:

"The Religious, if they are true to their calling, are never superannuated. The Egyptians of old said, 'Priests are always young.' We may say the same of ourselves, with better right. The principles of our state can never grow antiquated or outworn. They are always fresh, for they have the supremely vital character of being able to adapt themselves to any conditions that may arise. The youth is ever ready for new experiences, yearns forward towards them. So, the Religious is ready for whatever calls God has for him. He follows the Lamb 'whither He goeth,' and he knows not what course his Leader will take. Enough for him to be with his Leader, whatever the outward scene may be. Then, again, the Religious

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finds an affinity with youth in the presence of a joy that ever wells up within his heart. Youth is naturally joyous; for it is innocent of sin, and filled with the sense of a growing and developing life. So it is with the Religious. He cleanses his soul in the waters of penitence, and he is conscious of a life (not his own) which is ever putting itself forth within him. Then, too, youth has not yet built up the barriers which so often separate a man from his fellows, barriers of pride, selfishness, avarice, self-indulgence. So the Religious does not live a life shut up in self, but is open to those about him, ever evoking this goodness in them, and ready to communicate to them whatever graces or virtues God bestows upon him. Once more, youth is generous, magnanimous, liberal; not cautious, suspicious, penurious, or petty. 'The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.' So is it with the true Religious. He sits free to the cares of this world, the anxieties that infest those whose treasure is 'where moth and rust corrupt, and thieves break through and steal.' He is foot-free, for he does not drag along with him a burden of material goods. He is ready for sudden movements, with courage undaunted, with faith unshaken. All this puts the Religious into sympathy with youthful spirits. Yet, while youth has of itself but the support of nature, the Religious has his support in that which is above and beyond time."

### III

"Ready for whatever calls God has for him." The call to the Great Adventure was coming to James Huntington. It was on May 27, 1935, that he sent from St. Luke's Hospital, New York, a letter already quoted on page 202 to his sister Ruth, who had written him of her own experience while awaiting

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an operation. "I can quite imagine the sense of that abandon," wrote he. He knew himself ready, "dauntless," to launch upon that unknown sea where not rest but "storm-engendering liberty" such as earth never knew might await the souls of the brave. But the X-ray examination was deemed reassuring, and he was allowed to leave the Hospital, having had, as he said, "a really delightful rest here." He went to Philadelphia, preached on Sunday at St. Clements, and proceeded to duties at his beloved Kent. But from there he wrote his sister on June 6: "It seems that I must put off my visit to you till somewhat later, for four or five weeks, I fear." Another X-ray had showed an obstinate unmoved obstruction in the bowel, and the doctors sent him back to St. Luke's. He writes:

"This change of plan is a great disappointment to me, as I have several important engagements ahead, but I must get straightened out as soon as possible, to say nothing of the harm of allowing the physical condition to continue. I do hope that Mary will not feel the disappointment." (Mrs. Sessions was at this time caring for their sister Mary in her prolonged last illness.)

He had celebrated the Holy Communion in the School Chapel at Kent for the last time. But a day or two before he went back to the hospital, which he was not to leave again, he made his communion at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. As he went up to the altar, a little boy in one of the choir stalls slipped out and took his hand. It was a small grandnephew who had lately been confirmed,—we recall Father Huntington's approval of very early Confirmation. Together, man and child advanced to the altar and received the Holy Food. As they returned, and the child resumed his place in the choir, Father Huntington paused an instant, put his hand on

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the little shoulder, and paused to whisper a sentence. This was probably the last time he was in Church, as he was on the point of returning to St. Luke's.

Thence he writes on the tenth of June that an operation will be necessary. "Dr. Smith, who is a friend of our nephew James, will operate. Supposing things are as they expect, and allowing for some time for convalescence, I may expect to be in condition for ordinary life by Sept. 1. The doctors say that I am in excellent condition. . . . I am not upset by the prospect, whatever the issue may be. If I do not get through, I shall hope that my prayers for you all will not cease."

A post card the next day was the last message in his own hand:

"I look forward to an interesting experience. I will try to send you some word as soon as I am able to do so.

"It is rather strange to anticipate spending a whole summer in these four walls, but I could not be better off under the circumstances."

Where are his tremulous, almost exaggerated, fears of illness? In the grave presence of fact, these phantoms have vanished.

\* \* \* \* \*

The ordeal was on June 13th. "The doctor says that he went through his operation very well," wrote Father Schlueter to Mrs. Sessions. "He told Father Huntington that he was proud of him, and expected him to be on his feet in about three weeks. Father Huntington seemed much like his own self today, and I understand he kept his night nurse entertained part of the time with funny stories, and he is quite ready to talk about books he has read. He has excellent nurses, careful that he does not get overtired. I am afraid he needs that kind of protection. He is so eager to help others. For

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instance, twice since I have come down from the hospital, he has had the nurse call me up, suggesting letters I might write for him."

The happy hopes of recovery were not fulfilled. The patient grew gradually weaker. But still for some days he was able to give expression to his outgoing thoughts for other people, and so far as utterance was given him he remained entirely himself to the end. He took his condition with tranquillity and common sense, sending a message in response to the solicitous inquiries of his sister, "that he was suffering as much as a man in his condition would be expected to suffer."

To how many passing through experiences kindred to his own, had he given sustaining words of faith and cheer! Now in his own hour of trial, his high composure never failed. It has been truly said that to him "suffering was not a waste, but might be an energy released, working great works for God." Positive, creative, full of joyous achievement, as his life had been, many phases of the *Via Negativa* had been known to him. Now, like all other men, he was to meet the supreme test. He had given to his brotherhood the lofty name, Order of the Holy Cross. Now faith triumphed in knowing that death was the very gate of life. "Those whom the King delighteth to honour, He crowns with his own crown,—the crown of thorns."

Slowly it became apparent to himself and to those nearest him, that he would not rally. Friends gathered close. He was allowed to see Bishop Lloyd, and a very few others, including several Fathers of his Order. Members of his family, a nephew and niece, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Huntington, were in attendance; Dr. James Huntington came from Boston. Father Schlueter and Father Tiedemann took care of all correspondence. The Order watched, waited in prayer. Father Tiedemann had a room at the hospital, and stayed close, night and

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day. Loving and tearful memory recalls how in the middle of the night Father Huntington gestured to him. "Can I do anything for you, Father?" asked Father Tiedemann bending tenderly over the bed. "Yes," came the reply,—the words running a little together, yet with a familiar touch of gruffness. "Yes! Go to bed!"

"I gave him your message about his sister Mary," wrote Father Tiedemann on June 22nd: "He understood, and sends you his love. His mind is clear, but wanders very easily. . . . I gave him Holy Communion yesterday. He was very calm and peaceful and very wonderful through it. The Bishop of New York, Bishop Manning, has just called. The Father Superior" (Father Hughson) "is hurrying back from Africa."

"It is lives like his that are the strength of the Church," wrote Bishop Manning later. We learn that he had left the room in tears. Father Huntington and he had not always seen eye to eye; but in that hour, all clouds would have vanished from skies irradiated alike by light from the One Sun.

It is impossible to tell the exact point when full knowledge that he really faced the Great Adventure came to Father Huntington. But he was well aware, before the last. At midnight of June 21st he was communicated and anointed. He received his last communion on the Sunday following, June 23rd. The record of what were probably his final moments of consciousness has become part of the heritage of Christendom. It must be given in the very words of that son of his spirit who was privileged in those moments to be at his side:

"I knelt at his bed-side as he prayed a long prayer of blessing, not just a mere formal blessing. When I felt I could hold no more, I rose to go; and as I went to go, he held out his hand; and I took it. And he said, 'Edward, tell them I forgive everyone.' Then he added with intense feeling, 'Tell them

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I want to be forgiven.' And that he repeated three times; and then very solemnly he said, after a pause: 'Tell them I love them and I shall always love them; tell them I am praying for them, and I shall always pray for them.' And then, dropping my hand and lifting up both his hands as a priest does at the altar, he added: 'I am lifting up hands of intercession for them; I shall always intercede for them.' "

"That, I think, was the end of his intercession," adds Father Schlueter. "That he himself, and all of us, might be forgiven. In fact, I think his passion to understand people came out of this deeper passion, a passion for their forgiveness and his own forgiveness. With him it was always *forgiveness*. It was all *Given*. Given of God, freely."

\* \* \* \* \*

Father Tiedemann and Father Chalmers were beside him when out of quiet and gentle sleep he was born into the Life Eternal. This was on the afternoon of June 29th, the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul. His body lay in state in St. James Chapel of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, where the watch was shared by the Sisters of St. Mary Margaret, of St. Mary, and St. John the Baptist, and by priests entitled for one reason or another to the privilege. Many Requiems followed; at the close of the last mass, as the body was brought to the choir of the Cathedral, the organist drifted into Bach's Passion music, the scene of the Marys at the Sepulchre:

*Wir setzen uns mit Thränen nieder  
Und rufen dir im Grabe zu  
Sanfte Ruh', ruhe sanfte, Sanfte Ruh'.*

The Presiding Bishop, standing at the head of the casket, said the Collect for the Transfiguration and pronounced the blessing. After the service, which was attended by many

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hundreds of people, the body was carried to West Park, and was interred in the crypt directly under the high altar in St. Augustine's Chapel. There at the appointed times gather the Fathers of the Holy Cross, and there, trusting the last promise of his loving heart, they invoke the intercessions of the Father Founder.

THE END

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